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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

High School Drama as Experienced by Three Students of Differing Learning Styles

by

IRENE ROBERTSON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING 1989

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled High School Drama as Experienced by Three Students of Differing Learning Styles submitted by Irene Robertson in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Theresa Craig
(Supervisor)

Joyce Edwards

Date: March 23rd 1989

My family, friends, colleagues, students and my advisor encouraged me throughout this work. I dedicate this thesis to all of them.

ABSTRACT

This study examines learning style and how it relates to high school drama students. A Pilot Study suggested that there was a link between a student's choice of subject in senior high school and his/her learning style. This study led to further research in which the learning style of a grade twelve drama class is profiled using the evaluative questionnaire, Your Style of Learning and Thinking by Paul Torrance. From the results of this questionnaire three female informants were selected: an integrated learning style student, an integrated-favouring-right learning style student, and a right learning style student. Individual interviews with these key informants and with their drama teacher were taped and transcribed. Videotapes were made of each student in performance. Interpretation of the data links learning style to each student's expectations and experiences in the drama classroom. The study suggests questions for further exploration and establishes learning style as an exciting new component of drama education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I owe a great debt to the three drama students who became my key informants and to their drama teacher for sharing their world with me. This is as much their thesis as mine.

Providing invaluable assistance in the production of this thesis were Mary Ann, Kathy and Germaine.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Problem	1
	Description of Terms	4
	Limitations of the Study	5
	Significance of the Study	6
II	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	8
	Historical Perspective	8
	Neuroanatomy	9
	Hemisphericity Research	10
	Learning Style Theory	13
	Hemispheric Dominance and the Drama Student	21
	Review of the Literature: a Summary	23
III	PRELIMINARY WORK	24
	Study of Learning Style and Preferred Subject Area	25
	Test Results	26
	Conclusions of the Preliminary Study	26
	Preliminary Interviews	28
	Pilot Study:	
	Study of Cerebral Dominance and Drama Experiences	29
	Research Questions and Themes That Emerged in the Pilot Study	29
	Conclusions	32
IV	METHODOLOGY	34
	Design of the Study	34
	Ethical Considerations	38
	Informants	39
	Materials	40
	Procedures	43
V	DATA PRESENTATION	46
	Beginning the Journey	46
	Reflecting on the Drama Experience	47
	The Highlights	47
	The Valleys	49
	Continuing...	53

Technical Skills 55
Improvisation, Theatre Sports and Puppetry 56
Acting - We Love It! 58
Character Development 59
Directing the Character 61
The Actor and the Audience 63
Watching Others... 65
Other Favourite Subjects 67
Difficult Subjects 68
The Influence of Teacher Personality 69
Learning Style Profiles 70
Feeling 71
Thinking and Remembering 72
Talking and Writing/Drawing and Sculpting 74
Reading 75
Studying 76
The Structure of the Environment 77
In the Drama Classroom 78
Saying Goodbye 86
Teaching and Learning Styles 87

VI INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS 95

Results of the Questionnaire
Your Style of Learning and Thinking 95
Learning Style Profiles 97
Integrated Learning Style Informant (Ingrid) 98
Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant (Fay) 99
Right Learning Style Informant (Roxanne) . . 100
A Teacher's Final Reflections 100
Ingrid:
Integrated Learning Style Informant . . . 100
Fay:
Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant 102
Roxanne:
Right Learning Style Informant 103
Looking Back... Reflections on the Research Questions and Themes 106
The Length and Type of Involvement in Drama Activities 106
Reasons for Enrolling in Drama 107
Preference for Teaching Style 108
Students' Attitudes to Other Subjects in the High School Curriculum 108
Reflections on the Acting Experience 109
Academic Success and Future Aspirations . . . 111

Anomalies 111
Final Reflections 112
Recommendations 115

BIBLIOGRAPHY 116

APPENDIX I - Your Style of Learning & Thinking . . . 125

APPENDIX II - A Sample of Interview Questions and Responses of the Three Key Informants 131

APPENDIX III - Validation Statement 140

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Little analysis has been done in the area of high school drama and learning style. "To date, theorists have conjectured about the relationship of developmental drama and hemisphericity but apparently no one has subjected these theories to empirical scrutiny" (Wilkinson, 1983).

Hemispheric differentiation has been an area of extensive research led by Roger Sperry and Joseph Bogen (1950s) with split brain patients and verified by Jerre Levy (1984) for normal subjects. Their findings have led to further studies linking hemispheric dominance to learning style:

> An increasing number of educators throughout the country are beginning to realize that the concept of learning styles cannot be considered in earnest until we acknowledge <u>how</u> an individual child's learning style originates through brain processing... Different styles of thinking take place as a result of the way each half of the brain processes information. Before children's learning can be enriched their learning style, or natural processing system first needs to be determined.
>
> Zenhausern (1982)

Anthony F. Gregorc (1982), Bernice McCarthy (1982), Paul Torrance (1980) and David A. Kolb (1976) have devised useful scales for measuring the learning style preference of individual students.

Educators have suggested a link between hemisphericity and dramatic ability (Delgado 1986, Wilkinson 1983, Ferguson 1977). This link can be described verbally:

> Imagine my dismay a couple of years ago when at the end of a trying semester, one of my brightest acting students reflected somewhat regretfully, "Oh, the class was okay, but I didn't realize it was going to be so ... well, physical!" As a typically left-brain dominated student, surrounded by the left-dominant academic world, she had expected a heavier dose of analysis, psychology, and motivational discussion. Throughout the semester she had skeptically tested my right-hemisphere exercises, and despite the one occasion when she appeared in the Dean's Office, costumed and clucking like a chicken, most of her work had been restrained and predictable.
>
> The following year, however, the after effects of my efforts began to appear in her work. A new, exciting, open use of her imagination transformed her performances into interesting explorations of behavior. Furthermore, it was gratifying to hear her say how much she had learned the previous year, even though at the time she had not realized that the transformation was taking place.
>
> Delgado (1986)

Or it can be described diagramatically:

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Delgado, 1986: Acting With Both Sides of Your Brain.

Delgado (1986)

This relationship has not yet been subjected to scrutiny in high school drama education. Several questions emerge:

> Do high school drama students have a preferred learning/thinking style that is different from the general school population?
>
> What needs does drama fulfill for left

learning style, integrated learning style and right learning style students?

Does each student's individual learning style affect her relationship to her classroom experience, her attitude to herself, her classmates, to her teacher, and to the drama curriculum?

Does learning style contribute to a unique, individual drama experience?

Could I use my knowledge of learning styles for more effective teaching?

These questions led me to this study: DO DIFFERENCES EXIST IN A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE OF DRAMA AND, IF SO, CAN THESE DIFFERENCES BE RELATED TO A STUDENT'S LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE?

Description of Terms

In this study hemispheric preference scores will be used to indicate an individual's inclination to learn and think using the left cerebral hemisphere, right cerebral hemisphere or a combination of the two. To evaluate hemispheric preference, I used the 50-item questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking designed by Paul Torrance (1980) (see Appendix I). He describes a left dominant cognitive style as rational, responding to verbal instructions and explanations, experimenting systematically,

making objective judgements, being planned and structured, preferring certain information, analytic, relying on language for thinking and remembering, and responding to the structure of the environment; contrasting with the right mode which is intuitive, responding to demonstrated instructions, experimenting randomly, making subjective judgements, fluid and spontaneous, preferring elusive information, synthesizing, relying on images for thinking and remembering and essentially self-acting (Torrance, 1980).

Learning styles, as used in this study, will mean characteristic cognitive and affective behaviours that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment (Keefe 1979).

High School drama refers to the three year drama program outlined by the Alberta Department of Education. The key informants in this study were in their last year of high school and were eighteen and nineteen years of age.

Limitations of the Study

This study is not intended to be a physiological interpretation of brain functioning. It is limited to a consideration of one learning style theory: that of right/left mode techniques. The learning and thinking style of

the informants was evaluated using Your Style of Learning and Thinking, Form C-C, Paul Torrance (see Appendix I). The key informants were chosen using the results of this test. The theory translates readily to the classroom and the validity of this testing device is well documented (Torrance/ McCarthy, 1982).

The study involved three female students and their teacher, thus it applies to females only and would be difficult to replicate in exactly the same manner. However, the information obtained provides relevant implications for both teachers and students in similar settings and for individuals interested in the applications of learning style theory in the classroom.

Significance of the Study

Learning style theory has an established research base, but there is a significant lack of research linking learning style theory and the high school drama student (Wilkinson, 1983). There is a presumption, held by certain theorists (Delgado, 1986), that both right and left style learners are enrolled in drama classes. Thus, it would be informative to know the learning style profile of students who are enrolled in high school drama courses; i.e., is this profile different from the mainstream? And to move to the particular: what, if any, are the differences in the

drama classroom experience as lived by students of differing learning styles? Answers to these questions may facilitate more accurate curriculum implementation, more effective instructional strategies, and a deeper insight and understanding of the drama student.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, I will outline relevant literature that forms the basic premises of this study, beginning with a general historical overview of cognitive style and concluding with current research in learning style theory.

Historical Perspective

Educators, philosophers and psychologists have often suggested that there are two cognitive styles, or two methods, of knowing and relating to our world. The following table, adapted from Dorothy and Reeves (1987), indicates different modes of knowing and their sources:

Ways of Knowing

Mode		Source
Discursive	Non-discursive	Langer
Scientific	Artistic	Cassirer
Intellectual	Sensuous	Blackburn
Logic	Intuition	Assagioli
Deductive	Imaginative	Bronowski
Analytic	Synthetic	Koffka
Rational	Metaphoric	Bruner
Realistic	Impulsive	Hilgard
Objective	Subjective	Schopenhauer
Propositional	Apropositional	Bogen
Sequential	Simultaneous	Luria
Active	Receptive	Deikman
Analytic	Gestalt	Levy and Sperry
Explicit	Tacit	Polanyi
Sharpener	Leveler	Holzman & Klein
Differential	Existential	James
Rational	Intuitive	Maslow

Analytic	Holistic	Ornstein
Field Independent	Field Dependent	Witkin
Convergent	Divergent	Austin
Analytic	Relational	Cohen
Transformational	Associative	Jensen
Differentiation	Integration	Lomax & Berkowitz
Verbal	Visual	Numerous Sources
Western Thought	Eastern Thought	D. Suzuki

The first column tends to describe left hemisphere functions, whereas the second column tends to refer to right hemisphere functions. Philosophical arguments have been augmented by studies in neuroanatomy, which have subjected this sense of dualism to empirical scrutiny.

Neuroanatomy

The human nervous system is composed of the spinal cord and the brain. The brain, or cerebrum, is divided into two virtually identical hemispheres. Each cerebral hemisphere is divided into four lobes: frontal, parietal, occipital and temporal. Each of the four lobes has a different sensory or motor function. Parts of the temporal lobe are concerned with hearing; the occipital lobes are responsible for vision; the somatic sensory areas of the brain are located in the parietal lobes and the posterior part of the frontal lobes mediate motor functions. The frontal lobes contain the mechanisms of personality, temperament and emotional control and are also thought to contain the power associated with abstract thought (Restak, 1984).

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Corballis, 1983: Human Laterality.

Corballis (1983)

Physical examinations of the human brain remain silent as to revelations regarding the internal workings of the mind. However, science and medicine have progressed to the observation of split-brain patients and to the recognition of the more specialised and differential hemispheric functions (Goleman, Daniel, 1977).

Hemisphericity Research

With evidence obtained from split brain surgery and brain damaged patients it became evident that both the left

and right hemispheres are involved in different specialized functions. The relative strengths of these functions are still being debated.

Roger Sperry was one of the first to recognize the importance of the right hemisphere (1960). He experimented with epileptic patients whose corpus callosum was surgically severed. He found that they could verbally describe an unseen object when held in the right hand but could not do so when the object was held in the left hand. The left hand is connected to the right hemisphere which has little speech capacity. However, the patient did "know" what the object was and could physically point to a correct response. This knowing and telling without language is a function of the right hemisphere and manifests itself in all the arts (Regelski, 1978).

Sperry conducted another experiment in which a split brain patient was asked to assemble a set of blocks into a specific visual pattern. The patient was successful with the left hand (right brain) but could not complete the task when only allowed to use the right hand (left brain). It is also interesting that the left hand appeared furtively to try to correct the right hand's errors.

An experiment conducted by Joseph Bogen (1963) further links artistic abilities to the right hemisphere. The drawing ability of split brain patients was studied. Even when the patient was right-handed, drawings made by the left hand were fairly good representations. Drawings made

by the right hand lost all sense of form and tended to "list" things in the model rather than draw them.

Caution should be used in applying generalizations to normal functioning from surgical cases alone. In these patients, functions of one hemisphere may have been taken over by the other hemisphere due to the nature of the epilepsy or by the process of severing the corpus callosum. However, the question emerging is do "normal" brains react this way?

A potential solution to this question is suggested by an experiment, using normal subjects, devised by Jerre Levy (1984). She flashed images of split faces on a screen so that each eye and thus each hemisphere would see a different image. One hemisphere would see half of a face; the other hemisphere would see half of a different face. When asked to <u>visually</u> match the face to its duplicate, the subject would point to the face seen by the left eye (right hemisphere). When asked to <u>describe</u> the face, the subject would describe the face seen by the right eye (left hemisphere). Each hemisphere performed a different function in facial recognition. Although the information was expressed in a different way, the right hemisphere was as "knowledgeable" as the left hemisphere.

From these and other clinical experiments the following descriptors of the two hemispheres emerge (Kane (1979); Zaidl (1978); Bogen (1973); Gazzaniga (1973); Ornstein (1972)):

Left Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
like a digital computer	like an analog computer
verbal	non-verbal, visual
sequential, temporal, orderly	simultaneous, spatial, comprehensive
logical, analytical	Gestalt, synthetic
intellectual	intuitive, creative
mathematical	musical, artistic
controlled	emotional
detailed parts	wholes
active	passive
worldly	spiritual
serious	humorous

These descriptions of the two hemispheres emerging from clinical studies parallel the dual methods of knowing suggested by philosophers and psychologists. The descriptors have been used by Torrance, McCarthy and others to formulate questionnaires that reflect an individual's preference for left, right or integrated cognitive styles.

Learning Style Theory

Learning style theory is based on the following premise:

> ...there is not just one view of reality and one school of thought. Empirical, phenomenological, and scientific research have revealed that people perceive both the physical, concrete world and the non-physical abstract world. Some individuals, however, are more 'at home' with one world than with the other. This predilection affects what they see and don't see and what they experience and don't experience despite equal opportunities to react with the so-called 'same environment'.
>
> Gregorc (1984)

In this same sense, researchers have developed a variety of concepts and assessments of learning style. In this review I will comment on the learning style theories of Torrance, Gregorc, Dunn, Letteri, Hunt and Schmeck.

Torrance, Reynolds, Reigel, Ball (1977) and Kaltsouris (1979) have used hemisphericity research to develop instruments that determine preferred modes of information processing. The evaluative questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking, Form C-C, by Paul Torrance, was used by the researcher in this study. This self-administered questionnaire is based on research findings implicating the left hemisphere for "propositional, linear, sequential and verbal functionings and the right hemisphere for non-verbal, appositional, simultaneously processing functions" (Reynolds, Kaltsouris and Torrance, 1979).

Each of the 50 multiple choice items offers three responses in a random order: "one representing a specialized function of the left hemisphere, a second representing a parallel specialized function of the right hemisphere, and a third representing the complementary or integrated function of both cerebral hemispheres" (Torrance and Reynolds, 1980). An example from the questionnaire is:

I remember best

(a) names
(b) faces
(c) both names and faces.

Respondents indicate on a separate answer sheet which of the three responses best describes them. In the above items, selection of alternative (a) indicates left hemisphere processing; alternative (b) indicates right hemisphere processing; and item (c) indicates integrated hemispheric processing. Raw scores for right, left and integrated functioning are processed to standard scores for interpretation. A respondent may score anywhere within a +15 to -15 range indicating a learning style described as left, integrated favouring left, integrated (0), integrated-favouring right, and right. (See Appendix No. I) Substantial validity is reported on Form C-C (Torrance and Reynolds, 1980).

Other researchers utilize some hemisphericity concepts in their learning style models. Gregorc (1979) notes a link between learning style and hemispheric specialization:

> When the physical efforts of the brain researchers are combined with the psychological efforts of the learning style researchers, several parallels emerge:
>
> The brain is differentiated in function: the two halves process different kinds of information in different ways. The hemispheres appear to 'house' specific functions like analytic and synthetic processes, imagery and verbal responses, and simultaneous and successive processes in different sections. This supposition supports empirical evidence about the differences in stylistic responses to stimuli.

Gregorc's research on style led to the discovery of

five sets of dualities in perception, order, processing, relationship and decision-making. He developed the Gregorc Style Delineator which defines four learning style patterns: Concrete Sequential (CS), Abstract Random (AR), Abstract Sequential (AS), and Concrete Random (CR). Gregorc's Abstract Random category could be paralleled to a right-brain processing mode; his Concrete Sequential category could be paralleled to a left-brain processing mode.

Kathleen Butler has applied the Gregorc Style Delineator extensively in the classroom to reflect the differences in teaching and student style. She sees style as having three distinct roles in the classroom:

(1) Style as reflection of mind, as an instrument of thought.

(2) Style in reference to curriculum. She recommends bridging, a multiple approach and a matching strategy to coordinate student style with curriculum style.

(3) Style as reflected by the environment.

Using Gregorc's descriptors of CS, AR, AS and CR, Butler developed a "Teacher Observation Instrument for the Qualitative Assessment of Learning Style". Through two hundred descriptors the teacher assesses each student's behaviour in: organizational approach, approach to time, learning preferences, relationship with peers, relationship

with teacher, attitude toward change, creativity, and additional characteristics. The information is then reduced and used to construct a bar graph profiling the student's "Observed Learning Style".

Rita Dunn, Kenneth Dunn and Gary Price have developed a diagnostic and prescriptive model of learning style that includes a complex analysis of various stimuli and their elements:

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Dunn, Rita 1982: The Sum and Substance of Learning Styles
Early Years. January.

Dunn & Dunn (1982)

Although hemispheric concepts were not directly incorporated in this first model, Rita Dunn states:

> A recent study of 533 students evidenced that the group that
>
> 1) was not bothered by sound
> 2) preferred dim illumination
> 3) required an informal design
> 4) was unmotivated
> 5) was not persistent
> 6) preferred learning with peers and
> 7) preferred tactual learning,
>
> scored as significantly more right-hemisphere preferenced than the group whose learning style did not include those elements... Responding to youngsters' learning styles will increase motivation on every score and since children cannot change their hemispheric strengths, we should make every effort to use the methods and materials to complement their styles.
>
> Dunn (1982)

In 1984 a fifth category, psychological, and the label "simultaneous and successive processing" was added to this model.

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The elements analytic/global, cerebral preference and reflective/impulsive incorporated hemispheric concepts into this model.

Charles A. Letteri's (1985) approach to learning

style is through cognition. He believes that a "deficit cognitive style" should be changed to a style that results in high academic performance. Letteri developed two cognitive profiles each described by seven characteristics: high academic achievers, characterized by a cognitive profile that is "complex, sharp, tolerant of ambiguous information, analytical, narrow, focused and reflective"; and low academic achievers, characterized by a cognitive profile that is "simpler, leveler, intolerant of ambiguous information, global, broad, non-focused and impulsive." Letteri's intent to manipulate the "deficit cognitive profile" of the low academic achievers to become left-oriented high academic achievers overlooks the contribution and the potential of the right hemisphere.

In contrast to Letteri, David Hunt's (1979) approach is perceptive and practical. He relies on teachers' assessments of students' reactions to systematic changes in classroom structure and then describes students in terms of the conditions under which they are able to learn.

Ronald R. Schmeck sees learning style as a system of information processing that can range from deep and elaborative to shallow and reiterative. He emphasized the influence of context and believes that a student benefits from a mis-match of context and learning style. (Schmeck, Ribich, Ramanaiah, 1977).

There are critics of learning style theory. Leonard Davidman (1981) is skeptical specifically of the Dunn/Price work on learning style as he says it encourages "a false sense of knowing" and "undermines the greater vision of public education." In a later article, appropriately called Learning Styles: Research vs. Opinion, Dunn, Dunn and Price successfully defend their position (1981). Their position is supported by other researchers as well (Dunn, Cavanaugh, Eberle, Zenhausern, 1982):

> The case for matching learning and teaching styles grows stronger every year. In the early seventies, it was verified that students could identify their own styles accurately and, since then, many researchers have evidenced that both achievement and attitudes toward school improve significantly when instructional methods or resources complement the way individuals learn.

There is a widespread agreement among researchers as to the existence of individual learning styles. All agree that individuals process information differently. Not surprisingly, therefore, the researchers' various analyses and evaluation of this processing are often markedly different.

It appears that learning style is not a definitive, but a multi-dimensional concept:

> Torrance emphasizes left and right hemispheric processing modes;
>
> Gregorc describes learning style in patterns of

random/sequential and concrete/abstract;

Dunn diagnoses learning style in terms of stimuli and their elements;

Letteri equates a "deficit" learning style with low academic achievement and a positive learning style with high academic achievement;

Hunt focuses on an adequate or inadequate classroom environment;

Schmeck views learning style as shallow or deep information processing.

Many see left and right hemispheric processing as an integral part of learning style (Torrance, Gregorc, Dunn). All tend to see learning style in terms of dualities: shallow or deep processing (Schmeck); concrete or abstract (Gregorc); simultaneous or successive processing (Dunn); high academic achiever or low academic achiever (Letteri). These dualities echo descriptions of left or right hemispheric processing. Researchers agree that learning style theory can facilitate an understanding of how a student learns. The differences in their learning style models may reflect the differences in their own perception of the world.

Hemispheric Dominance and the Drama Student

The North American school system provides an educa-

tion devoted almost exclusively to developing the verbal, rational left hemisphere. With the exception of the fine arts options of drama, art and music the right hemisphere is unrecognized in the school curriculum and goes largely untaught. This seems to be changing. The Mead School for Human Development is based on "Right Brain" education (Fine Arts Council, ATA 1978). A "Report Card for the Other Side of the Brain" has been developed by Mary Ferguson (1977). The "Learning Style Inventory" designed by Dunn and Dunn is in use in Edmonton public schools. In spite of this enthusiastic application, the research linking right style learning with fine arts education is incomplete. One of the published studies that directly relates drama education to hemispheric dominance was conducted by Joyce Wilkinson (1983). She found that right-hemispheric specialization scores of a drama group were higher than the average scores of non-drama groups. These conclusions were replicated by the researcher and a colleague (1985) in an unpublished study comparing the hemisphere dominance of high school students. (See Preliminary Work.) Wilkinson found that there was a significant relationship between the Developmental Drama Scale (DDS) and the right-hemisphericity scale of Your Style of Learning and Thinking Children's Form A. High DDS scorers were more right-brain oriented than low DDS scorers. This study gave empirical support to the image of the highly involved drama student being right-brain dominant and having above average acting skills. The lack

of research relating student brain dominance and drama education creates an exciting and relevant opportunity for further exploration.

Review of the Literature: a Summary

The sense of a dual way of knowing and relating to the world is centuries old. A physical examination of the brain does little to support this concept but experiments conducted with split brain and normal subjects indicate that hemispheric specialization does exist and echoes the dualism suggested by philosophers and psychologists. Evaluation of hemispheric dominance is difficult to assess but is possible through the use of descriptors suggested by split-brain experiments.

Learning style theorists have used the descriptors of hemisphericity and the dualisms suggested by philosophers and psychologists in their learning style models. Learning style research is incomplete and still highly controversial. The study by Joyce Wilkinson provides an empirical link between right hemisphericity and the highly involved drama student. Future research may allow students to learn as a result of, not in spite of, their individual learning style differences.

CHAPTER III

PRELIMINARY WORK

My involvement in right-brain learning began when taking a watercolour painting course from an instructor who "taught to the right side of the brain". He introduced me to Betty White's Drawing From the Right Side of the Brain. Tentatively, I used some of these methods and found that I became more adept and more confident at "seeing" and interpreting my visions. On reflection, I noted that several parallels emerged between the learning that occurs in art and that which occurs in drama. I began to look for material that specifically addressed learning style theory and drama education. There was much conjecture but little actual research in this area. However, there was a wealth of information on left and right-brain functioning which provided an engaging metaphor for the duality of the "fine arts" as compared with the "core subjects" in the school curriculum.

A colleague in the high school in which I was teaching was also interested in hemisphericity concepts and how they might apply to her math students. We decided we would investigate the preferred learning style of students in senior high school math classes, social studies classes, and fine arts classes.

STUDY OF CEREBRAL DOMINANCE AND PREFERRED SUBJECT AREAS CHOSEN BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (1985)

Our test group consisted of 170 students at a Composite High School (total population 700 students) who were tested using the 50-item questionnaire, Your Style of Learning and Thinking, Form C-C, Paul Torrance.

The questionnaires were distributed during a one-week period in February, 1985 to 170 students who were divided into specific groupings:

(a) math classes

(b) social studies classes

(c) drama classes and

(d) art classes.

All questionnaires were anonymous and students were given the option of not participating in this Preliminary Study. Most students were tested as soon as they entered the classroom. A few students were enrolled in more than one class and did the test more than once, however, in all cases their second score was within two points of the original testing. All students were given the discussion sheet, and, in informal discussion the majority felt the results were true for them. Although the answer sheets were anonymous, many students discussed their specific results with the teacher. In compiling the results of this testing certain relationships emerged:

TEST RESULTS

LB = left-brain learning style

WB/LT = whole-brain with left-brain tendency learning style

WB = whole-brain learning style

WB/RT = whole-brain with right-brain tendency learning style

RB = right-brain dominant learning style

N = total numbers out of 170

Type of class	LB	WB/LT	WB	WB/RT	RB	N
Math Classes						
Math 30	1	14	1	8	0	24
Math 31	3	8	0	4	0	15
Math 20	1	8	0	9	4	22
total in %	8.2%	49.18%	1.64%	34.43%	6.56%	
Social Studies Classes						
Soc. St. 20	0	8	1	8	2	19
Gen. Psy. 20	0	6	0	12	4	22
total in %	0%	33.15%	2.43%	48.78%	14.63%	
Drama Class						
Drama 30	0	3	1	4	8	16
Drama 10	0	4	2	8	4	18
total in %	0%	20.59%	8.82%	35.29%	35.29%	
Art Classes						
Art 30	0	1	0	4	1	6
Art 20	0	2	1	4	2	9
Art 10	0	3	0	6	1	10
Special Ed.10	0	3	0	4	2	9
total in %	0%	26.47%	2.94%	52.94%	17.65%	

Conclusions of the Preliminary Study:

The students' preferred subject areas appeared to be related to their learning and thinking style. Senior matriculation math courses tended to be the most dominant in

the left-hemisphere mode of thinking (57.38%) compared to other courses. Social studies classes' scores were between the left and right mode with a tendency to be more to the right. The drama and art classes scored a high 70.58% and 70.59% respectively in right-brain and right-brain tendency learning styles. In individual scoring, many of the right-brain dominant art and drama students scored at the very upper end of the right dominant scale (+13, +14 etc). This did not occur at the corresponding left side of the scale in any group. Overall, female students tended to have high right dominant scores (69.34%) and low left dominant scores (24%). Male students were more left dominant (53.75%) than right dominant (45%).

Rather than drawing definite conclusions this Preliminary Study led me to some general questions:

(i) Is the education system organized so that left style learners can be educated more easily?

(ii) Due to their hemisphericity, do male students receive an advantage over female students in our schools?

(iii) At what age does the learner develop a preference for one type of learning style? A low number of students fell into the Whole-Brain category.

(iv) By relegating the fine arts subjects to "options", are we not depriving our students of a total education?

Many implications for fine arts education emerged:

(i) Did involvement in fine arts courses eventually result in students becoming right style learners or did right style learners naturally choose an area that was compatible with their learning style?

(ii) Were right learners more competent in the fine arts than their integrated and left-style classmates?

(iii) What encouraged the left style and integrated learner to pursue drama? What needs did drama fulfill for them? Did these needs differ from the requirements of the other learning style groups?

Preliminary Interviews

It was exciting to discover that students tended to choose subjects that complemented their learning styles. However, I felt that a quantitative analysis could not provide insight into how students of differing learning styles felt about their education; specifically their drama education.

> Any explanation of behaviour which excludes what the actors themselves know, how they define their actions, remains a partial explanation that distorts the human situation.
>
> Spradley (1979)

Using Spradley as a guide, I conducted and audio-taped interviews with two first-year university students who both had an extensive drama background. These initial interviews acquainted me with the world of drama students and gave me

the opportunity to augment quantitative data with qualitative information.

Pilot Study: Study of Cerebral Dominance and Drama Experience

I still questioned whether there was a difference in the drama experience for students of differing learning styles. What needs did drama fulfill for left, integrated and right learning style students? To see if there was any relationship between learning style and drama experience I interviewed three grade ten students from an urban high school (December, 1986). According to to their classroom teacher's evaluation one had a right learning style, one had a left-brain learning style and one had an integrated learning style. The following interpretations, based on the transcripts of their interviews, indicate some of their reactions to the themes that we explored during this Pilot Study.

Research Questions and Themes That Emerged in the Pilot Study

a. The length and type of involvement in drama activities

The right dominant subject had been involved in drama since the primary grades. We can question whether this involvement fostered interest in right-brain activities or whether the subject sought out drama experiences due to a

right-brain dominance that naturally existed. The left dominant student had a more recent involvement in drama (8th grade, then 10th grade) and enrolled on the positive recommendation of an older sister.

b. Reasons for enrolling in drama

The left-brain dominant student liked to "act out the people you'd like to be". She also enjoyed the social aspects of being in drama. "The people in drama are different ... but they all sort of go together." The integrated student was most practical. "It helps with speech. It lets me act more natural." The right learning style student was most personally affected. "I feel good at it. I skipped all the other classes but this one - once, once I skipped it. My mother thinks that it's really changed me, a lot, and I think drama helps people express themselves, their real selves, not their shell, their masks, that they put up front. I think it really helps you come out and show who you are."

c. Preference for teaching style

In the Pilot Study the personality of the teacher was of greatest importance to the right learning style student. The integrated learning style student and the right learning style student were most specific about teaching styles:

"I find sitting and listening to instruction hard. I like when they show you things. I like films."

d. Students' attitudes to other subjects in the high school curriculum

The right dominant student and integrated student preferred physical education, social studies, biology and English (except grammar) to mathematics, physics and chemistry. The right dominant student also showed an interest and respect for other fine arts. "I like designing things, making abstract art. I'm not talented at drawing though." The left-brain subject was the most vague. "I find the other subjects boring but I can't really describe it."

e. Reflections on the acting experience

This was the most difficult part of drama for the left-brain learning style student. "When you're acting and everybody's watching you at first and you sort of feel self conscious and that ... I'm not too good at that." The right-brain learning style student found it most memorable:

> ... and the audience responded as well ... they were there. It made me stand and appreciate it for awhile. I used to always, to help me with stage fright, look out over the audience but ignore that they were there. And I think that this was the first time that it really broke through. The audience was

> there and it was tremendous, just standing there I really found it satisfying!

f. Academic success and future aspirations

The right learning style student seemed to have the most problems in school. "Sometimes I don't do too well on things ..." but displayed a positive accommodating approach to academic goals. "I want to get my BFA and maybe my MFA but I'll take a college acting course if my marks aren't high enough." The integrated subject was most practical.

> I'd like to take it all the way to Drama 30 if I could fit it in and then I'd like to take some courses at the Citadel. If I got a chance to become an actor I might consider it. But I don't know if I'd like to be involved in that aspect of it because you have to devote your whole self to the drama. I don't see if I could do that or not.

Conclusions:

My Pilot Study indicated that there was a difference in the drama experience of the students interviewed, but were these differences related to the student's learning style preference? Drama also appeared to fulfill different needs for the three students in this Pilot Study. Was this linked to the students' learning style or was it just a matter of individual preference? A pattern appeared to be

developing, but more intensive study was necessary to provide an in-depth answer to my question: Was there a difference in the drama experience of students of differing learning styles?

The themes that emerged in the pilot study needed further analysis; they guided my explorations in the main Study that followed.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

There is a movement to "legitimize" research in the arts by forcing it into quantifiable modes (Dorothy & Reeves, 1978; Bogen, 1963; Owens & Limbers, 1983). The potential danger of this is that we may thus reduce knowledge to only that which can be empirically reported. This may be a fundamental error, since we are aware of more than we can discuss: no one explanation is capable of incorporating the totality and the intricacy of all the findings (Babbie, 1986). Ernst Cassirer (1953) affirms the importance of both the scientific and artistic viewpoint to create a depth of vision:

> The two views of truth are in contrast with one another, but not in conflict or contradiction. Since art and science move in entirely different planes they cannot contradict or thwart one another. The conceptual interpretation of science does not preclude the intuitive interpretation of art. Each has its own perspective and, so to speak, its own angle of refraction. The psychology of sense perception has taught us that without the use of both eyes, without a binocular vision, there would be no awareness of the third dimension of space. The depth of human experience in the same sense depends on the fact that we are able to vary our modes of seeing, that we can alternate our views of reality.

My study began with a quantitative outlook: I was interested in numbers, in facts. I asked, "What is the percentage of left and right style learners in a drama class? How did this compare to the numbers of left and right style learners in a mathematics class? ... and in a social studies class?" I came to the question of "So what?" What does this mean? What implication does this have for the dynamics of a drama classroom, for me as a drama teacher, for the drama student?

In this sense I moved from a quantitative view of reality (how many students exhibited a particular learning style), to the particular (studying a few students in depth). This triangulation can create a vivid, multidimensional view of the drama student.

> The use of several different research methods to test the same findings is sometimes called <u>triangulation</u>, and you should always keep it in mind as a research strategy. Since each research method has particular strengths and weaknesses, there is always a danger that research findings will reflect, at least in part, the method of inquiry. In the best of all worlds, your own research design should bring more than one research method to bear on the topic.
>
> Babbie (1986)

In this study, through the questionnaire <u>Your Style of Learning and Thinking</u>, the quantitative research design identifies and outlines descriptors of the three key informants, who are representatives of the learning style groups that exist in the drama classroom. It is balanced and extended by the qualitative research design which,

through interviews and observation, explores and interprets these informants as human beings whose individual stories have relevance and meaning.

An attraction of qualitative design was that it was most suitable for the research I was interested in: research in the arts and in teaching. Eisner (1979) emphasizes the qualitative nature of the arts.

> The revelation of the qualitative aspects of life, particularly those aspects that deal with what individuals experience in various situations, has been a major focus or artists through the centuries ... Through literature and through effective criticism we come to know what it feels like to be in prison, to be in ecstasy, to be in a particular classroom in a particular school. Through the arts we have the opportunity to participate vicariously in the lives of others, to acquire an empathetic understanding of situations, and therefore to know them in ways only the arts can reveal.

As a researcher in the arts I was interested in knowing how students felt about their involvement in drama. I wanted to share in these dramatic experiences, to empathize with and reflect on these aesthetic situations and thus come to know and understand the student in a broad "painterly" fashion, full, alive and colourful.

Qualitative research is also suitable for research in teaching, as teaching can be an aesthetic experience; teaching can be an art form. (Eisner, 1979)

> There are at least four senses in which teaching can be considered an art. First it is an art in the sense that teaching can be performed with such skill and grace that, for the student as well as

> the teacher, the experience can be justifiably characterized as aesthetic.
>
> Second, teaching is an art in the sense that teachers, like painters, composers, actresses and dancers, make judgements based largely on qualities that unfold during the course of action.
>
> Third, teaching is an art in the sense that the teacher's activity is not dominated by prescriptions or routines but is influenced by qualities and contingencies that are unpredicted.
>
> Fourth, teaching is an art in the sense that the ends it achieves are often created in the process.

Qualitative research thus appealed to me as a teacher: in a sense it told my own story, it reflected my daily world. Qualitative methods were also suitable for this part of my study for several additional reasons: I felt the classroom teacher of my key informants was actively engaged in teaching as an art: she was creative and reflective; her teaching designs were innovative and directly involved the students in an aesthetic process; the drama curriculum, with its emphasis on process, on becoming rather than on production and completion, was itself qualitative in nature. A qualitative research design was appropriate and essential in providing a complimentary vehicle by which information could be obtained in this study of drama and learning styles.

Interpretation of the data follows the analysis suggested by Babbie (1986):

> As perhaps the most general guide you look especially for similarities and dissimilarities ... Introspection- examining your own thoughts and feelings - is a natural and crucial process for understanding what you observe.

Ethical considerations

The study was done in one high school and in one Grade XII (Drama 30) classroom. This school will be referred to as "Suburban High School" in this study.

Entry into Suburban High School was arranged by the county administration in conjunction with the University of Alberta, Department of Secondary Education. Before any testing occurred, approval and permission were obtained from the County administration, the principal and the classroom teacher. Informed consent was obtained from the students who were given the right not to be tested if they so desired. The informants were asked to put their names on the questionnaire, Your Style of Learning and Thinking, Form C-C, so that their teacher could identify the following informants: a left learning style informant, an integrated learning style informant, and a right learning style informant.

Students understood that they could withdraw at any time from the Study and that a withdrawal would not affect their relationship with the classroom teacher or with the researcher in any way. Students' real names are not

included in this Study.

Three students were invited by their classroom teacher to become further involved in my Study. They were not pressured in any way to become "key informants", and they understood that they could withdraw at any time from the Study. Interviews with the key informants were tape recorded and transcripts of the tapes were given to each student for validation before being included in this Study. To provide a visual record of the students' work, a videotape was made of each student's year-end acting monologue. Each student and the teacher was given a copy of this videotape, but to preserve anonymity, the videotape is not available for public scrutiny. Strict anonymity of the school and the participants was maintained throughout the Study. There was a clear understanding between researcher and informants as to the extent of the confidentiality of the information divulged. Some of what the informants said was considered privileged information and will not be included as part of this Study, however, none of the restricted information related in any way to the question being examined.

Informants

The key informants were three female students of middle-to-upper socio-economic background enrolled in the Drama 30 program in a suburban Alberta high school. Female

rather than male informants were used in this study for the following reasons: the majority of students enrolled in Drama 30 classes are females, and studying same-sex informants would preclude differences that may be sex-based in their origin. Drama 30 students were used as informants because their drama training would have had a more substantial impact on their personal development compared to younger students, and they might have a greater propensity to reflect upon this major portion of their lives that, with graduation, was drawing to a close.

Materials

1. SOLAT, Form CC by Paul Torrence (see Appendix I)

Purpose: This is a self-administered questionnaire which evaluates learning/thinking style preference. It was used to evaluate the learning/thinking style of a large group of high school students in my Preliminary Study and in my Pilot Study, and in this Study it was used to choose the three key informants. It was administered to two classes of Drama 30 students in Suburban High School on May 5th and 6th, 1987.

Items: 50 multiple choice

Scoring teacher scored; monitored by the researcher.

2. Marks submitted by the classroom teacher

Purpose: Marks provided a quantifiable assessment of the informants' progress and delineated areas of expertise and weakness.

Items: The classroom teacher shared her formal evaluation procedures with the researcher.

Scoring: Was done by the teacher, interpretation by the researcher in conjunction with the classroom teacher.

3. Videotapes of the informants.

Purpose: The videotapes provided visual material of each informant involved in the art form.

Item: A videotape was made of each informant's performance of a monologue from the production Talking With ... (Martin, 1983). These monologues were rehearsed in class and performed publicly earlier in the year.

In my interpretation I was interested to see if there were

any relationships between the choice of the monologue and the performance of the monologue that might relate to the students' learning style.

4. Interviews with the informants

Purpose: Formal and informal questioning techniques recommended by Spradley (1979) and Babbie (1986) were used to extract research questions and themes from the Pilot Study and explore these further with each informant. The same basic questions were asked of each informant, through three series of interviews. (See Appendix II for a sample of questions and informants' responses.)

Items: The questions were developed by the researcher, concerning (inter alia):

(a) the length and type of involvement in drama activities

(b) reasons for continuing enrolling in drama as far as the Drama 30 level

(c) attitudes to other subjects in the school curriculum

(d) preference for learning and thinking style

(e) reflections on the acting experience and other elements of drama education

(f) academic success and future aspirations

5. Interviews with the classroom teacher

Purpose: The interviews with the classroom teacher served to establish any comparative difference in learning behaviour of the three informants from a teacher's point of view, to expand the known information concerning each informant, and to establish a frame of reference for the researcher in terms of the curriculum being studied by the key informants.

Items: Interview questions were developed by the researcher and the teacher was encouraged to describe her teaching of these three students as fully as possible.

Procedures

The Study commenced in the latter part of the second semester program in Suburban Composite High School. The questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking (Torrance,

1980) was administered to all students who were enrolled in Drama 30 in the second semester. From this group, which consisted of two classes, I was hoping to choose one female informant in each of the following categories: a right learning style, an integrated learning style and a left learning style. However, there were no left learning style female students in either Drama 30 class. The possibility of this had emerged in my preliminary work (see Pilot Study 1, p.25). As a result, I selected key informants to represent a right learning style, an integrated-favouring-right learning style, and an integrated learning style: the three groups that actually existed in this drama classroom.

After completing the evaluative questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking the Drama 30 class, with the exception of the key informants, was debriefed as a group with their teacher present. The researcher explained to all of the students that the purpose of the study was to find out if there was a difference in the drama experience of students who had differing learning styles. Each student was then given the discussion sheet (see Appendix I) which accompanied the questionnaire. This sheet provides a list of descriptors of left and right hemispheric processing. Students discussed the relative functions of the left and

right hemispheres. Students were not asked to reveal their scores to their classmates or to reveal their names to the researcher. They were assured that their scores were not an evaluation of either their intelligence or creativity: rather, it was one evaluation of their style of learning and thinking. The students understood that no terms of good or bad, or right or wrong were attached to this evaluation.

Many students had some knowledge of hemispheric processing from their biology and psychology classes; consequently, their discussion was informed and animated. A majority felt they had learned more about themselves; others felt they already "knew" this information but had never previously seen it explained or applied in such a manner.

Three months after the study began the key informants were given typed transcripts of their interviews to read and validate, then were individually debriefed.

The teacher and the researcher agreed that no visible negative effects had occurred; clearly, the students' reactions indicated that they were enthusiastic about their testing experience.

CHAPTER V

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Throughout the Study, I was fortunate to have articulate, reliable informants who were open and candid about their life and their relationship to drama. From their responses to themes that were discussed during the interviews an image of each of the three informants emerged; and, each image became dynamic and focussed through a juxtaposition of each of their dialogues with the researcher. To preserve anonymity, the Integrated Learning Style Informant will be referred to as Ingrid, the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant will be referred to as Fay, the Right Learning Style Informant will be referred to as Roxanne, the classroom teacher will be referred to as Miss Smith and the school will be referred to as Suburban High School. All other teachers and schools will be given fictitious names as they appear.

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

When and how did you first become involved in drama?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> As a little kid acting out things for the street. The first play I did was in grade 5. I've always liked to play act and it continued on through school.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I have always wanted to be an actress since I was little, yet I can't even remember if I was ever in plays when I was little. I am sure I was, in little things in elementary school. I am sure we did little skits. Now that I think about it, when I was in grade 8, we did a play, but it wasn't a drama class, it was English, and that is actually when I started. Now that I think of it, that is when I got involved with it, in grade 8, with little skits here and there, little things for the class. I have always enjoyed it and been involved with it since I was little.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I have always been a performer, and have mimicked commercials and made up my own. I have been creative ever since grade two. I guess I have always been imaginative. My parents always encouraged it. They sat and watched politely, and laughed at the appropriate spots. They have been very supportive.

All of the informants had a satisfying early involvement in drama. Ingrid and Fay viewed this as "play acting" whereas Roxanne saw herself as "performer" at an early age.

REFLECTING ON THE DRAMA EXPERIENCE

The highlights. I asked my informants to describe three things they liked most about drama.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> In my life, I like to be close to people, not a lot of people, just a few around me. I sort of surround myself in a huddle of friends. I like getting closer and closer and understanding them, like putting the pieces of a puzzle together and understanding someone. My friends call me an empathy machine because I see it and when someone tells me about a

situation they are in, and I can say I think that person is like this because this is what he has done, and I can feel it. It is the same as how I can read a script off the paper and I can feel it. I like that, and I like getting close to anybody, whether they are a character on a sheet of paper, or if they are a real person. Sometimes the character is easier, because they don't fight you and if you are wrong, they can't tell you that you are wrong and it is fulfilling to find that person in there. Sometimes with your friends you can't get that deep, so I guess it is just a substitute. I like the understanding of other people it gives you. That's number one.

Number two, I am a very melodramatic person and drama has lots of space for that. It lets you pretend you are someone else, and put yourself in a situation that you probably would never get into in real life, but it gives you a chance to feel it. I loved "Talking With" because it was so dramatic. I loved the script and I loved my piece. Especially the marbles on the floor, were kind of crisp, I don't know how to explain it. The sound and the rolling was kind of symbolic, and I love that.

Number three, I like to work with other people, and help others come along their drama road. That gives you a sense of helping someone out, and when people value your opinion or ask how you would do something, you feel special. It is fulfilling to do a show with people who care about it, and to work together, and then see the final product and you learn something more each time and how to improve it.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

Besides the acting aspect of drama, the thing that I will never forget is the closeness drama develops. It is like you have a second family, because you share experiences, you share your dislikes and likes and your personality is shared with a group of people. It has taught me a lot about myself, but it has also taught me a lot about others too; learning how to accept them. The closeness with the other students would be my favourite part of drama. I never had a chance to go in depth into the technical part of drama because I was usually the one on stage having the lights shone on me.

> Besides being on stage and being in the play, the second part of drama I probably enjoyed would be the exercises. I enjoyed the exercises that get you in tune with the play, or your character, and help you concentrate.
>
> The third thing I liked was working with makeup, and learning how to do different things with it. This year I learned how to make wrinkles!

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I like the positive feedback, I like the camaraderie between the actors, and I like the feeling of being involved in an art, and developing it.

The valleys. In contrast I asked my informants about their least satisfying drama experiences.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant

> Number one would be being stuck with someone who is there only for credits. They don't care about drama, and don't care about anyone else in the show. You can work hard to get it done, and they can ruin it, and ruin everything you have done and everything anyone else has done. I have always wanted to be an unselfish person, but when I see someone doing that, and messing up so many other people, it makes me really angry and impatient. The only time that really happened was in Drama 20 when we did a collective, where three people were doing the collective and everyone else was just standing around doing nothing. When it came time to do the collective everyone who was standing around doing nothing started complaining about how they didn't have enough parts and it was just garbage. I just wanted to leave and not do it, but then I thought that was just like them and "copping out". I had to struggle with myself and try to be patient... with someone who is not helping and you have done everything you can, there is no way you can change it. To top it all off, they were all mad because I was impatient. It was horrible, and the only time drama was a chore for me instead of something I could escape into.

The second one would be the rivalry and the competition, even in the school. I just like it because I like doing it, I have my fair share of a dramatic ego and I have had to bat it down and bury it thousands of times. I always do, but there are people who don't, like friends of mine who somehow miraculously remain my friends. There is so much competition even in the classroom. There are people who don't care about drama and don't try; ask someone who <u>does</u> care and tries very hard what their mark is and then they get mad because yours is higher than theirs. I have had a few bad experiences with that even with one of my friends. But now in grade twelve, there wasn't any of that at all, because we both knew it and tried to avoid it. In grade eleven it was really horrible.

Then there is the drama festival with the awards. There is so much competition there that I have almost a love/hate feeling for the festival. I like to go do my show, and for everyone to see it, but I hate all the back-stabbing that goes on behind stage that none of the directors ever see. All the interschool competition and all the subtle jabs and remarks and looks. It is like a cat fight almost, and it is horrible. Why is there a cat fight over something which is enjoyable to do? That is probably the reason why I wouldn't like to pursue drama on a professional level, I couldn't handle the competition all the time. I like people to like me and I am really insecure and I hate it when people don't like me. It bothers me when friends all of a sudden don't like me. I would much rather be a librarian and have a few friends than have to fight for every part I get. I guess the third thing is not being able to say "Macbeth" in the change room ....

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

The one thing I disliked the most would be the competition aspect. I have always really loved drama, and I consider myself quite a good actress, but this year, I felt there was more competition, that everyone was trying to be better than everyone else. Sometimes it seemed like a big competition to see who could be the best. That's the biggest thing I hate about drama. I felt the competition in the classroom and at the festival. You can expect to feel competition at the festival but for it to be in the classroom, that makes things even worse. Working with people closely, you get on each other's nerves, and you find different things about a person that you

> don't like, and I'm sure that is where competition begins.
>
> The second thing I dislike is forgetting my lines. When I start forgetting my lines, I begin to get really nervous and I feel like I will mess up the whole play, and I don't want to continue. When we did "Graceland" and there was just the two of us, and such a long script, when I missed a line I started to panic. I have never been in the position where I totally didn't know what my line was. When I forget a line, I get really nervous, and it is just a matter of staying calm and trying to just get through it.
>
> The third thing that I disliked was having embarrassing experiences. In one play I did last year, I had to walk to the front of the stage and talk to the audience. I was wearing these boots that were too big for me, and I ended up getting to the edge of the stage, and I lost my balance, and I fell off the stage. That blew my concentration. It was so embarrassing! I really hate moments like that because they totally ruin the effect.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> Number one would be memorizing lines. Stage makeup would be next, and the last one would be the feeling I experience during the first five seconds on stage. After those five seconds though, I get into it and am fine!

Roxanne was least confident with this style of questioning (where the informants were asked to actually describe three things), and gave short abrupt answers. All the informants were enthusiastic about their experience of drama. Memorization was an area of concern to Fay and to Roxanne. Competition was a major issue for Ingrid and Fay. It was not mentioned by Roxanne so I asked her about it in a later interview:

The other informants mentioned competition. What is your reaction to competition?

> If someone wanted the part enough to compete for it, it is not worth it to me to compete. I would give it up, just to maintain that camaraderie. If it was causing strife, and someone felt they didn't have a chance to shine, I have no problem with giving in, because I have had my chance, several times. It is only fair. If someone thinks they can do a part better than me, they can have it.

How did you feel about the festival? That is quite a competitive situation.

> I loved it! The reaction we got was shocking. I finished my part and the audience started to clap. That shocked me, because that was the first time we actually knew <u>all</u> of our lines, and intertwined and acted together. The festival was much more than I expected. I liked meeting other actors and seeing the other plays. I enjoyed seeing "Talking With", because I enjoyed seeing what it would look like. I found it wonderful. I didn't find the other actors too competitive backstage in regards to winning awards. I didn't go expecting an award and I found the people I talked to the most were students from Neighbouring High who have always been our main competitors. The students from there were so supportive, and we walked around saying their lines from "The Leader", and they said ours. We met the guy who did the monologue "Charley". He was wonderful and very supportive of us. It was a neat experience and worthwhile!

Roxanne's positive reaction to the drama festival reflected her own non-competitive nature, and re-emphasized the social aspects of drama for her. She did recognize the difficulties inherent in festival work:

> Although the students from Youngstown High gave a valiant effort, I felt sorry for them because I didn't enjoy it. It isn't fair to the actors. They weren't ready. Their show wasn't solid, so I felt bad but I was also insulted because they were taking up time others could have used. I don't think I could have handled the festival in grade ten. I had never acted on a stage before, I had never seen or touched a script.

—

Continuing...

Why did you continue your involvement in drama to the Drama 30 level?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I enjoy drama and I felt I was half decent at it; I didn't get a chance to take it in Junior High because of the options. It's a way to relate to people; becoming someone else helps you to understand everybody else. I like doing it, I do it well and I wanted to continue.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> Drama is more mix and mingle with everybody, and when I first moved over here, I didn't really know anybody, but after my sister was in it, watching the plays and hearing about it all the time, I decided I wanted to continue. That was what made me want to continue. All my friends were in drama, and I decided I wanted to do that too!

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> Miss Smith is my inspiration [to continue]. She is an absolutely brilliant teacher! I have gained so much experience from her, not only the drama aspect but also learning how to be sensitive towards a character, towards yourself, understanding and working with others.

The integrated and integrated-favouring-right style informants viewed continuing on into high school drama as highly people-motivated: they were involved because of wanting to be with others, wanting to understand and relate to others. Roxanne, the right learning style informant, was highly motivated by her teacher. Future involvement was more problematic:

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I really don't know what I want to do right now. I'm going to France for a year and I'll probably take drama there in French. I may take a few courses at University.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I hope I can pursue it after high school, and somehow get into the theatre. I don't know where to start looking, but I hope I will be able to be involved in plays, maybe at the Citadel. Maybe in the future I will be in a movie! I will be going into NAIT, and I haven't completely decided yet, but the closest I can get so far is NAIT. I am hoping to get into Radio and Television Arts. Maybe through there, I can get into broadcasting, or something with television.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I have been thinking about that a lot lately, and I don't really see myself having a career in drama, unless I could be working with kids. I would like to get involved in summer stock. I am not going to university, but if I was I would get my degree, but I don't have the grades for it ... I think I would just be involved in summer stock, or summer school with kids.

Technical Skills

Drama isn't only people. What about the technical skills required? As indicated in the following, the integrated learning style informant seemed to possess the most knowledge and experience in the technical aspects of theatre.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I've done makeup since grade eight. Since I've been in high school every show I'm in I do my own makeup, and I help other cast members because I know the basics ... I've always been involved in my own costume, no matter what that was, and sometimes with other people. Last year I designed masks which is part of a costume. A friend of mine did it [set design], but I helped her with it. You make your suggestions as actor. I've taken tickets. Two years ago a few friends started a community theatre group. I was the secretary-treasurer for that, and I usually organized meetings and such.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I have not done a lot of theatre makeup, but I know the basic things, like powder, and how to make wrinkles, how dark the makeup should be. I haven't really gone into anything like different shapes and forms you can make the face. As far as costumes go, we have had a variety of costumes throughout the years I have been in drama. We have never had to make our own costumes, so we have had no experience with making and designing them. Set design is basically the same as costumes. I haven't really designed sets, but I have talked about it, and someone else, like Building Construction, makes sets. I understand designing it, but we have only discussed what the set should look like. Last year I was involved with ushering, taking people's money, and handing out programs. I have never had a chance to stage manage. I usually have someone being a stage manager for me. I am usually in the play, so I

have never been involved in plays on the outside.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I basically did my own makeup for drama. I have never been a really heavy makeup wearer so my experience with applying it is really limited. In everything I have done I have been dressed as an ordinary person and have used just my own clothes. I don't sew, so I can't make my own costumes. I have always been into dress-up, and I think I could put an effective costume together if I had something to work with. I have no experience in set design at all. I am quite uncreative when it comes to that sort of thing [front of house], I have a real problem with promotion, I am too shy to tell people about it. I am not into promotion, I am more of a supportive person.

Improvisation, Theatre Sports and Puppetry

Of the three informants, the Right Learning Style Informant (Roxanne) was most enthusiastic and experienced in these areas. The Integrated Learning Style Informant (Ingrid) saw Theatre Sports as problematic.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I never got involved in improvisation as an extra-curricular activity, but you do 'improv' in the class. And with the kind of friends I have you always break out into 'improv'. Theatre Sports, every time it was done in class nobody would do anything. It wasn't good Theatre Sports. Nobody was pulling their own weight. It was not enjoyable. The only other bad experience I can think of was Drama 20 working on a collective when nobody was doing anything. There were two people in the class pulling the weight for everyone.
>
> I did take it [puppetry] for one year in junior high and I quite enjoyed it. It's because they don't see

your faces and you can be so many different characters at once.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

I think improvisation was the most difficult, because when we were improvising, it was on the spot improvisation and that was difficult. I don't know if I just couldn't think of something or if I was just too embarrassed. That has been one part of drama that has been hard for me, even though I have wanted to get more involved with it. I really have to work on it.

I haven't really been involved in Theatre Sports. Once when the festival was here, we had workshops we could go to and my sister and I worked with Joe and Wes with Theatre Sports. My sister and I were involved in a little skit with that. That is about the only experience I have had with that. That was the first and last time I have ever seen Theatre Sports.

I have never really worked with puppetry, except when I was little. When I was little, I used to take socks and we learned to make puppets in art when I was in grade six. I haven't worked with puppets for a long time.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

Improvisation is all we have done since grade nine, right up to grade eleven. I really enjoyed it. It is a lot funnier, and less restricting than acting from a script.

I <u>love</u> Theatre Sports! I <u>live</u> for Theatre Sports! We have done a lot of Theatre Sports. They can get to be a little redundant, but I have always been the enthusiastic one about that sort of thing.

I used to have puppets that I used to take to school all the time. I have had no professional training in puppets. I have always been a puppet fiend! My favourite puppet is my hand. My friends and I have Mr. Hand. We walk around and use Mr. Hand, and he says things that we don't say. Other than that, I haven't had much experience. I started playing with puppets in grade three. I would use socks, and make

them talk. I never thought about my experience with puppetry, but I have always used puppets.

Acting - We love it!

All the informants saw acting as a distinct and integral part of drama education and said it was wonderful!

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> Acting ... I've done lots of that! I've done a play every year since grade five; at least one. Some years I've done two. I've always been involved with drama. In school I've always been known as the drama person, that's my reputation. That's the thing I've had the most experience at, acting ... I look at somebody, look at their situation and know what's the matter and feel it, and be all sympathetic about it. I can even cry about it, not because I want to but because it's internalized. Acting, that's what I like to do.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I think the acting part of drama has been the best. Being in drama actually has not just given me the chance to be in front of an audience but it has given me more confidence and made me more outgoing. I used to be really shy, and it wasn't until I became involved with drama that I felt more comfortable with people. I think that is where I started to feel better about myself. Hearing comments like "You did really well" made me feel good about myself, even if it was only a play. I don't know how far I will go with theatre, but even if I don't get very far, I will never forget the two plays I have done this year. I loved "Graceland" and I also really liked "Talking With".

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I love to act, and I am a ham. My biggest problem is I play with the audience too much, and that is something that I have to work on. I enjoy being in the spot light and I enjoy the compliments. It gives me such a good feeling. Acting is my favourite aspect of the theatre!

Character Development

There was a shift in emphasis in describing the development of character as 'putting the character on' by the integrated informant to 'becoming the character' by the right learning style informant, a distinction similar to the presentational compared to the representational (Stanislavski Method) schools of acting.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I look at the piece, and I get feelings off of the paper. That way I can empathise with the character. I just find those wherever I can, and at the same time as I am doing that, I approach it in a logical way. I think about how I would say that to someone, would I pause here, how would I say that? Usually the character is there for me right away, it's just a matter of being able to put the character on, and developing the speech.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I didn't put in a lot of work into the character study. I did work, but I didn't do as much as I should have. I went through the character, and I separated it into units, and tried to find the motives of that character, how that character thinks and what influenced them into what they are.

> Basically I used the character study, and I worked line by line, to determine how a character would say her lines and why she would say them like that.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I used mostly my own imagination. I got up as basically myself, which was kind of neat. I basically interpreted it myself. I have a tendency to act like my characters, instead of my characters being like me. With "Carter" I walked around being dumb and irritating my boyfriend. In a lot of ways I become my characters and pick up a lot of their traits.

In a later interview the Integrated Informant acknowledged her own movement from character analysis to internalizing a character.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I have been confident in my ability to interpret a character. I never was before and I didn't want to make a mistake, but I learned that sometimes your mistakes aren't on the wrong answers. You become more confident and explore more avenues. As you learn each step it gets easier and easier, and you are able to go on and learn even more, and incorporate other things which you couldn't worry about before. I never used to worry about my enunciation because I was worried about my blocking, but now I can worry about my enunciation and my character and facial expressions all at the same time. Sometimes the ideal is to not worry about it at all, and just do it and do it right because you are the other person. That has only happened to me three or four times but they have been spread out over the years, and this year it wasn't even in a play. It was in an exercise class and was sustained for about five minutes, which was my maximum for not having to think about it. That is the ideal you reach for and it is getting so that whenever I get there, I stay there a little bit longer.

Directing the Character

The Integrated Learning Style Informant and the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant both employed specific characterization techniques, techniques which they also saw as necessary in effective direction.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> [In directing] it depends on the level of actors you have, because if it was a drama class where you have different levels of capabilities, you have to start out on character first. There is no way around it, even if you are doing blocking and lines at the same time. The main thing would be to try and get everyone to have the same level of character understanding. Some people are going to get it quicker than others, especially in a class. For those who are finding it more difficult, you can work with them when you are doing blocking. You never do one thing and then move on to another, you are always doing them together.
>
> Pacing is really important too. Not just how fast you are saying things, but how round the show is, like nobody talking in just one tone of voice, there has to be variation. You get speech patterns, and you have to get rid of them. You have to find the main ups and downs, and once you've got them, there are little ones in there, and so you try and find them, and some people will find them faster than others. Sometimes the people who are quicker can pull the others along. Character development, pacing and the roundness of the show are important.
>
> The picture is important too. I am an artist, I paint and take pictures, and it has to look right on stage. You should almost be able to take a picture of every scene, and it should make a good balanced picture. That is hard to do, because you move around and that doesn't always happen. The best show I ever did was the one I did last year, "Stage Direction". We had a dark set, and we spent a lot of time with who should be standing where.

The whole package needs to be a unit. You can have each aspect just perfect, but if they don't make a complete unit, it is not a good play. Some plays are harder to do because they are not written well and are not a unit in the script, and so you have to compromise. I have never directed anything on my own but in our class it has always been everyone participating. I am highly critical and some people get mad at me and so I try to be polite and say it in the nicest possible way. You have to be careful, because when peers tell peers what to do, there will be resentment. I would like to direct a play sometime, but it will have to be with people who were not my peers.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

To me the most important part of a play is the lines. Stage directions should come last, because if you don't have the lines down pat, you won't get the same effect, so the first thing I would do is make sure everyone knew their lines. I would work on it piece by piece, until everyone knew their lines. Once they know their lines, I would work on the stage directions. When the actors don't know their lines or they just don't say them in the right way, people don't get the same effect, and that ruins the play. I think that to make a piece work, there has to be an immense amount of character study done so that the actor/actress can really get into the part and become that person. I really believe that it won't have the same effect and be believable unless someone looks at you and says you are that person. It takes a lot of work and dedication, but for the piece to work, you have to make sure you know what the character would say at a certain point, and why. Just having the lines memorized isn't enough. You have to know <u>why</u> they say what they do. I have had a little bit of experience with directing. We played a game where we had to take four people, three to be actors, and one directing, and we had to work on part of a play. I had a chance to direct it. We only took a couple of class days to do it, but what I did, was work with the people on their lines, and we discussed it. I thought it would be a good idea to have input from the actors themselves, and see how they think something should be said and done. That helped a lot. I don't think I could be the type of director who makes all the decisions on my own. I would take a lot of input from the actors, and make my decision from there.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I have always felt that if you take the most wonderful person in the world and put them in the director's chair, they become the worst person. I would make sure that the actors understood what I was saying. I would let them contribute a lot of their own ideas and interpretations. Miss Smith has given us a lot of room in which to move, and if something is wrong, she is honest enough to say so. Honesty and compassion are important.

The Actor and the Audience

Of the three informants, the Integrated Learning Style Student was most comprehensive in her analysis of the audience. The other informants stressed an intimacy with the audience that was integral to their experience of acting.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> It all depends on the play you are doing. "Stage Direction" and "Talking With" and "Bartok" (three of the five plays I did in high school) were not funny plays. They were very serious, and for the most part, teenagers have enough seriousness and some of the melodramatic people, like myself, enjoy it; and then there are the people whose teacher forces them to see the play. It is beyond them and they do not understand or enjoy it at all. I have discovered that comedy wins out over all, as far as the class audiences go. "The Real Inspector Hound" is a serious play but it is on so many levels that if you don't get it, you still enjoy yourself because it is funny and it doesn't make any sense; if you do get it you enjoy it because you get it. We had a good response to that one because it was so complicated and it was hilarious. We had people in wheelchairs, and lots of people on the set in slinky dresses and so the audience enjoyed that one. The school audience, and the festival audience enjoyed it. The

festival audience usually appreciates the work you have done, even if they don't like the show, because they are actors too, and they can see how hard you have worked.

Evening audiences get the adult humour, and they get the play, and all of a sudden, you have people laughing in parts where you have been waiting for laughter before, and never gotten it, and it is a relief to finally have an audience that understands. "Bartok" is not a play for high school audiences and we were really worried about doing it for audiences in school. Even at the festival we were worried because it wasn't like the other shows. We did two evening shows and our first one was when the play wasn't so good. Two weeks after festival we did another evening show and it was almost as good as our festival show, and for me it was my best show. We could hear that the adult audience appreciated it.

"Talking With" was more difficult to judge the audiences. We didn't do it at festival, but I think it would have been appreciated. It is a really hard play to sit and watch, because it can get tedious, so it is not a coherent package, and most people who aren't into drama can't see why we would do a play like that. I think the best audience for "Talking With" would be fellow actors. The evening audience was good, but the school audiences only enjoyed the funny pieces, and they were also touched by the really dramatic parts. The audience was very quiet and we felt as if there was an empty theatre....

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

When I am on stage, I rarely look at the audience. I don't try to pretend that they are there, but it ruins my concentration if I meet eye to eye with someone. When I know there is an audience there, I feel as though I am teaching them something. I'm not being an entertainer, but I'm showing them something and teaching them.

In "Talking With" we got more response with the adult audience. I don't know if it was because it was a more mature play, or if it was directed towards a more mature audience or if when we did it at school they were falling asleep anyway! I don't have to look at the audience, but I have to know that they are there, and it bothers me when there is a joke and the audience doesn't laugh. I begin to blame myself,

and think I didn't give enough to it. I am the type of person who loves making people laugh, and that is mainly what I like doing. I guess I am entertaining!

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

I would not like to do anything for my parents. If they want to see me act, I'll get them a tape! When I did my Mary Pickford, and I was asking "Can you hear me?", my mother was answering me! That killed my concentration. I wouldn't want them to come see me again.

The adult audiences were kind of dead. They didn't understand the jokes and they were only interested in seeing their children acting and becoming stars. They didn't pay much attention to the play.

The daytime audiences were excellent! They are so alive. Festival audiences would have to be the best because they know what it is like to be up there, and they are quiet when you are up there. They also know how much positive feedback counts. I would do a festival anytime because the audience is so wonderful.

I really feel the audience is very important. I wouldn't want to just do acting exercises. Doing a show without an audience, especially one like "Talking With", where my character needs the laughs in order to play up her part, the energy is so low. When you have an audience, you are nervous and that gets the adrenalin going and giving you energy, helping you remember your lines. The audience is <u>vital</u>!

<u>Watching Others...</u>

All the informants had the unusual experience of watching another actress play "their" character at the Zone Drama Festival. Their reactions were quite different.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I hope this doesn't sound mean, but I was actually disappointed. We had done a lot of work on our show and mine was very close to the finished product. The interpretation in the other scene was flat, there were no peaks, and no valleys, and certain emotional parts in the piece weren't there at all. I love the piece and I guess it was because I love it so much that I was over critical. I didn't enjoy it at all. Some people agreed with some of my criticisms about it having no peaks and valleys and playing with the marbles all the time upstaged the speaking. Throwing the marbles across the stage didn't seem to fit. It was a different interpretation. What I got from it was that this person hated her mother, and because I saw proof in the monologue that she loved her mother, I didn't like the interpretation.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> That was the weirdest experience. I was nervous for her, but I wanted her to make a mistake because we were in competition. As far as character study, I think I went the furthest with Bev. I worked on her character day and night. When I watched the other girl, I was going over the lines in my mind, and I felt like she was portraying me. That was a really freaky experience, but it was a good experience too. I got to see how she developed her character. She said lines differently, and she had different actions, and even the stage direction was different. I found it really interesting. Because it was at the festival, and they went on before we did, it made me more nervous to do my part. I thought something might go wrong because I saw another interpretation of it.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> Actually, I found it quite odd, because I thought I would be possessive, and angry that someone else had my part, but I enjoyed her performance so much. I thought she did a great job, her voice suited the character and I cheered for her through the whole thing. It didn't disturb me at all, like I thought it would. Some other characters disturbed me more. I could really relate to the actress who played my character.

Other Favourite Subjects

English was a strong favourite of the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant and the Right Learning Style Informant. The Integrated Learning Style Informant was most adaptable to all subjects.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I'm a student who likes everything, I guess the most enjoyable ones would be the drama, art classes, social studies and the reading in English. Biology 30, I loved it!

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> My favourite subject is drama, but next to that I really like English. I also like chemistry. I never liked chemistry when I was little, but now it is one of my most favourite subjects. Social is interesting, but it bores me. I have always enjoyed learning new things, and I find that all three of these subjects keep my attention. I love reading and English has a lot to do with reading. I have always enjoyed writing essays also. I don't really know why I like chemistry!

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> My favourite subjects are drama, food studies, and languages. I loved English because I loved Shakespeare. I think the man was just brilliant! I also had an excellent teacher, which helped. I am half French and that cultural feeling of wanting to be able to speak to my relatives and friends is very precious.

Difficult Subjects

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> The most difficult would be parts of English, I get the most frustrated with it. Poetry I like doing it on my own, but when someone tells you wrong it takes the fun out of it. Chemistry and math I don't enjoy it. I can do it, but it's something that's just there.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> Social [is most difficult]. I don't know why, because it should be an interesting course, but I guess it is just not one of my interests. I really enjoyed Social 20 and studying Greece. I enjoyed all the history, but politics is one subject that I really could care less about. I guess that is why I dislike social so much. I used to like math but it started to become frustrating when I took Math 30 last semester.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> Math [is most difficult], and anything that has to do with numbers, because I don't get along with numbers. I also don't like business, or anything that has to do with personal gain, or money. I want absolutely nothing to do with money at all. Social gets on my nerves because I hate geography, and I hate memorization. I even have a problem with memorization of a part in a play. Miss Smith has to push me to memorize my parts. I usually do it, but I don't like it.

All informants expressed some difficulty in math but for the Right Learning Style Informant, math was a personal enemy, incomprehensible and even infringing on her world of drama through memorization.

The Influence of Teacher Personality

What effect, if any, does the personality of the teacher have on enjoyment of the subject?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> No matter what my teacher is like I will do well. I basically find out what the teacher wants and I give it to them. It's certainly more enjoyable when you get along with your teacher. My art teacher frustrated me, and I didn't take it again. I didn't know what she wanted, as soon as I know what somebody wants, fine, or even an idea.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> It has a lot to do with it. I almost immediately like or dislike a course depending on if I like or dislike the teacher. Having a teacher that I really get along with makes it that much easier and enjoyable to take a course.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> It has everything to do with it! If a teacher doesn't like me, I start to panic, and I won't go to the class. I am very sensitive to vibes. I am not a good student, because I really don't want to be here. I was dragged through high school, kicking and screaming. I don't do homework. I do participate in class discussion, but when I am out of class I am like a part-time student. Maybe I am too sensitive. If I feel that someone doesn't like me, I back off right away. If my teacher likes me, I enjoy the class. I can tell if a person likes me or not by the way they react to me. I had one teacher who liked to talk as much as I did, and I was infringing on her space, and I talked out of turn. I could see that it would get on her nerves. She wouldn't really listen, and I took that quite personally.

LEARNING STYLE PROFILES

"What do you know about left-brain and right-brain learning styles?" I asked my informants.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> As soon as I heard about it, I kept telling myself I was right-brained, I am artistic. I wanted to be right-brained more than anything else, but I knew I wasn't, because I'm too logical. I am more artistic than my father who is a perfect example of a left-brain person. As soon as I heard about it, I knew I was somewhere in the middle, and I didn't know which side I leaned towards. Depending on what I am doing, I see-saw back and forth. I think right now I am a little more towards the right brain, because of the drama, and I'm getting back into painting and I'm not structuring things as much. I could change again. This has always been me, I have always been good in school and I have always been good at planning and organizing. But I was always more artistic than most people too, so I knew I was both.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I don't really know all that much. When we first started doing these interviews, Miss Smith told us you were doing a study on right-brained, left-brained drama students. My social teacher mentioned it once, and explained what each side controls, and I find it fascinating. I don't remember exactly which side does what, but I am definitely more right brain because I am more emotional and intuitive.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I basically only know that the left brain controls the right side of the body, and that the right brain controls the left side of the body. People who are left-brained are usually more sensitive, better at writing, and have more tendency to lean towards the sciences and math.

Feeling

All the informants, especially Ingrid, had a general understanding of hemispheric specialization.

How did the informants perceive their own learning style in terms of left and right hemispheric processing? The personality descriptors on the discussion sheet following the Questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking guided this last series of interviews.

Do you feel you are free with feelings or more in control of your feelings?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I wish I were in control. I used to be in control, but not in the sense of deciding when to feel what, but now I can't control them. Sometimes I pretend I am in control when I am in front of other people, because I am an actress. If I am upset because of someone else, but I still care about them and I really don't want them to know for their own sake, I will put a cover on it when I am around them. I guess I have less control over my emotions than I have control and I like that because it is natural.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am controlled, in that I don't tell everyone how I feel, yet I am not always controlled. Sometimes I like to let people know how I am feeling but other times I keep to myself.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am free with my feelings! If I have something on my mind, or if I want to pay a compliment, I will

> tell someone. I'll even do it to someone I don't even know. It makes them feel good, and it makes me feel good. I saw something I liked and I acknowledged it. Everyone enjoys beauty...

Confusion rings strongly in Ingrid's response to freedom of feeling. She desires both to be in control and to be free. Fay displays an interesting dichotomy: she can be free with her feelings but she controls the times when she will allow herself this freedom. Roxanne was enthusiastic in her response. Throughout the interviews she often exhibited this freedom even if her feelings were not always positive.

Thinking and Remembering

When you are thinking, do you think in terms of images or in terms of language?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> It really depends on what I am doing. Drama is images because you are looking at images but English is language. When I am writing notes it is language which I transform into images. Every year I get better at it. Each year my average gets higher and higher. It depends on what I am doing...

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I think in pictures.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I rely on images. When I close my eyes and think of a person, I have a picture of them in my head. I also think in colours. If I see someone who is happy I think of pink or peach, happy colours.

Only the integrated informant said she thought in language as well as pictures. In reacting to most interview questions, her answers were longest, and she exhibited a sense of confidence with spoken language.

The process of remembering was similar:

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I have a partial photographic memory. I take pride in my notes, and I don't have pages and pages of black ink or blue. I use four different colours, like red for things I want to remember. That way, I can remember the progression of things so when I am writing a test, I can remember what it says and I can picture the paper and read what it says. My memory is very quick too. That is why school is so easy for me. Some of it is images, but some of it is remembering things that have been said. Sometimes I can remember things even if I have never seen it written down before. I guess I remember images the most but I do remember ideas too. You can't get an image for math, yet I remember it. I also am good at breaking things into general rules. I bring everything together in my own head. I guess my memory is a combination of them both.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am more inclined to remember pictures. I can remember what people say, but images help me remember what the person said and what went on.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I remember in actual events. I remember how it happened. I have a bit of a photographic memory,

because I remember everything as it happened.

Again, Fay and Roxanne seemed most inclined to remember in images rather than language. There was a sense of change in emphasis from the linear to the holistic: Ingrid remembered 'the progression of things'; Fay was 'inclined to remember pictures'; and Roxanne 'remembered in actual events'.

However, although Fay and Roxanne thought and remembered most often in 'images' they felt they were least adept at drawing and sculpting in comparison to talking and writing.

Talking and Writing/Drawing and Sculpting

Do you prefer talking and writing, or drawing and sculpting?

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer talking and writing. I have never been much of an artist!

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer writing. I have always been into writing poetry. I try to create an image with words. I have always had a good vocabulary and when I have a chance to think about what I want to say, I can create some interesting images.

Roxanne implies the sense of drawing or sculpting in her use of words to 'create an image'.

Ingrid felt most competent in drawing and sculpting:

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I am good at both. I like to think I am an eloquent speaker, but quite often I like to sit down in my room and paint with my watercolours. I am good with clay. I am good in both areas, but right now the world calls for being good at talking and writing. If you want to live comfortably, you have to be good at talking and writing. People who draw and sculpt have a hard life. Right now my talking and writing skills are more polished than the other part, but I feel that they are just as strong.

She possessed skills in both areas but she was practical: 'talking and writing' skills would allow her to live more comfortably; so these were the skills that she said were polished.

Reading

How do you approach reading a book or a play?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I read the whole thing, just to get the feel of it. Then I go back and analyze it systematically. I will read the script one day, and then a few days later I go back. If I don't like it, which has happened to me before, I read it again, and pick out little things ... and systematically analyze them.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I look at little parts as I read, and when I am done I put it together into one package. After I am finished, I analyze it as a whole ...

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I grasp the whole concept first. I finish a book and then I contemplate it. I'll think about it for a long time, sometimes even weeks, and I relate it to people I know, even myself, and I find I get a lot more out of the book ...

Ingrid and Roxanne first read to establish an overall picture; Roxanne related this picture to people in her own world. Ingrid systematically analyzed for detail; Fay's analysis was of the whole; Roxanne did not mention any systematic analysis.

Studying

Would you describe your study habits?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I really used to be carefully planned. I would write down my exam dates and have planned out which nights I would study. I didn't like it though, and this year I didn't do it, and I relaxed more. Lo and behold, my marks went up five percent. Being carefully planned was causing more tension, so I tried to put in more open-ended, and that has helped... For me, there has to be a balance in between.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I don't carefully plan when I study. I study when I feel like studying because if I plan it out, I start thinking about other things. I just take it as it comes.
>
> On a test ... I really like being able to state my opinion and everything I know, but sometimes I don't know what I am talking about, so then I prefer multiple choice exams. I <u>feel</u> better when I am doing a

> long answer exam because multiple choice questions can confuse me....

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> [When I study] I prefer to be open-ended. I don't like to plan because if I set a time limit, I sit and watch the clock. If I <u>can</u> study and concentrate, I <u>will</u>. If not, then it is useless just sitting there because I get angry and frustrated. I would rather just let things happen.
>
> I prefer open-ended exams. If I don't know what I am saying, it is easy to talk about all that I do know, and in an off-handed way get the question right ...

Fay and Roxanne had flexible study 'habits'. They appreciated open-ended exams rather then definitive multiple choice exams because open-ended exams gave them a chance to exhibit what they <u>did</u> know. Ingrid was comfortable with both; she had experimented with a variety of styles of studying and she was still an honours student; in fact her marks had improved. Marks were important to Ingrid: she mentioned them often during the interviews; however, marks were rarely mentioned by Fay and were never mentioned by Roxanne.

<u>The Structure of the Environment</u>

Do you respond to the structure of your environment?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I respond [to the environment] because I am amiable and moldable and I can't get away from it. It is a

> bad thing sometimes because I fit myself to other people.. I am always trying to live up to everyone's expectations. I have always responded to my environment but I am realizing that it is necessary, and you can't ignore what goes on around you but you can't react to other people all the time. I was leaning towards responding, but now I am leaning back towards being self-acting.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I can study and listen to music at the same time, and I can study when there are people around. I don't have to have complete silence, but I am easily distracted. I can adapt though.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> My moods fluctuate, and the environment has no effect on it whatsoever. I can be in a good mood one minute and in a bad one the next, no matter where I am. I don't respond to the environment. It has everything to do with me ...

Fay and Roxanne saw themselves as essentially independent of their environment and self-acting. Ingrid was faced with a dilemma: retaining her sense of self and relating to other people at the same time. She often appeared to be in the most difficult position: Ingrid saw both worlds, she was in both worlds and she wanted to please and accomodate both.

In the Drama Classroom

Do you prefer a participative or an authoritarian structure in drama class?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> It has always been participative, even in drama club things. Because in the drama club people were talented and they could participate. If you had ranked it, it would have stagnated the show because you wouldn't have been getting the input that you could. If you rank it too much, the actors may resent having different statuses in the classroom. Having a person they may feel is their equal, their peer, as their superior, it tends to create friction, and that stagnates the input.
>
> A drama class has to be structured a little bit, in that it needs an instructor, but every time you structure more than that, there will be animosity, and it may make it more difficult and it is hard to get away from that. In my other classes I can handle having a teacher telling us to do the work, and leave us on our own, because I can teach myself, but it is far more enjoyable when you have a teacher who helps along the way and explains things. It is better to have a teacher who works with you but remains the authoritative figure. You don't want someone to be one of the guys too much because of the problems it may cause.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer the participative structure because I don't like having people <u>telling</u> me what to do. Rather, I like having people's opinion. I like getting closer to someone and following their suggestions.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer a participative structure, because everyone should participate in decisions. I tend to be a bit of a Marxist, and feel that everyone should be able to join in and reap the benefits. <u>That</u> would be the ideal. If everyone was concerned for others and worked together for a common goal, it would be excellent because people tend to get on an authority trip. Even with teachers, because so many people look up to them, and put their lives, minds and educations in their hands.

The responses here were quite diverse: all the informants said they preferred a participative structure but Ingrid suggested that the teacher could be an authority figure; Fay stressed that she would follow a teacher's suggestions after she got closer to her; Roxanne saw a participative structure as a responsibility of the student.

Although the informants said they generally preferred a participative structure, they all said that they preferred to receive established information in contrast to uncertain information.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I like to have some concrete base, because I don't always like to be up in the air. It is nice to have a bit of a concrete base to know what you are doing. In your struggle to find something out, you may come upon many possibilities and there is no right or wrong. You wouldn't get that if someone always told you what to do. In drama, it is very important to be elusive. I hate tests on poetry, when the teacher asks what a certain poem means because there is no black or white, yet the teacher says that it is one thing, and you know it is more than that. I guess I like a mixture of both.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer established information. I catch on to things quickly and I hate to do them over again. I want to do it right the first time, so I want instructions to be clear so I know exactly what to do.

Ingrid and Fay said they preferred established information, but Ingrid appeared to be flexible with the

type of information she was prepared to work with. "... you may come upon many possibilities and there is no right or wrong ... I guess I like a mixture of them both".

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I prefer established information. Don't give me something that you aren't sure about, because I will go with that.

Roxanne implied the concept of 'established information' was flexible and she was willing to go along with whatever was introduced as 'established information'.

Learning could be facilitated by a variety of methods: verbal instructions, demonstrations and illustrations.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I respond to both [verbal instructions and demonstrations). If I get one, I see one side and I can go from there, but if I get both, it becomes three-dimensional. That doesn't only work in drama, it works in every kind of class. A teacher can give a lecture on something, and I can understand it, but if they give a demonstration, such as a film, it broadens it. I can do fine with one or the other, but both makes it really clear. When I get both, it is easiest for me. Biology 30 would have to be the class most cramped full of information, but I remember it the easiest because we get lectures but also films and I can apply it to myself. I don't have to work as hard to remember it because it hits all sides of me and I recall it.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am good with both actually. In social class, the teacher can be lecturing on and on, and will have lost everyone else, but I can sit and listen to people talk. I like hearing what people have to say and it helps me understand more. I remember more if a person talks than I do if I read it, but when it comes to someone showing me and demonstrating, I understand and remember it more.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I respond better to demonstrations and illustrations because with a lecture, it goes in one ear and out the other. I try and concentrate on a point at a time, and expand on it right away. By then, the teacher has moved on, and I missed a lot. I get totally lost and frustrated. I prefer demonstration because I can see exactly what is happening and I don't have to work it out on my own.

Ingrid indicated a positive sense of integration when information is presented both verbally and visually. She responded to both; each enhanced the other resulting in 'three dimensional' knowledge. Fay found reading the most difficult medium for learning. Spoken language increased meaning as did showing and demonstrating. Concentrating on specific points of a lecture was frustrating for Roxanne, who felt a necessity to expand and relate each specific point to a whole. She strongly preferred visual illustrations.

How did my informants personally relate to the drama class: were the informants planned and structured or fluid and spontaneous?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I don't like being planned and structured, even though I am right now. I enjoy drama because I can't be planned and structured. Right now I have to plan and structure myself because I am going away and everything has to be organized. There are so many things I have to do that right now I can't be spontaneous, as much as I would like to be. In drama class it isn't like that, because the class isn't planned and structured. Each day the teacher gives a guideline, and we just do it. It was more fluid. As far as academics and how I am running my life right now, I am planned and structured, but I am looking forward to going away because then I can be spontaneous...

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am spontaneous. I get bored with things and I look for something else to do, so I am more spontaneous because I don't like everything to be planned the same everyday.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am fluid and spontaneous because I live for the moment! I never know what I will do ten minutes from now, so I enjoy the present, and try not to worry about the future. I have absolutely no structure in my life at all. I don't think I could handle being structured ...

Ingrid enjoyed the drama class because it allowed her to be more spontaneous than she could be in the other aspects of her life. The drama class <u>was</u> organized: Miss Smith made and implemented effective daily plans, unit plans, and a Five Year Plan. However, this planning and structure was not always apparent to the students. Overall, Fay and Roxanne saw spontaneity as an integral part of their personality; there was a sense that structure would result

in boredom and repetitiveness.

The informants indicated they liked a lack of structure. Did they experiment in a similar, random way to assignments?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I have a tendency to be random at first, like I will take the script and read it over and tape it into a tape recorder. I then go back and listen to it and decide what needs work, and I write it down. Then I go about it systematically. You can't start systematically because then you don't get the feel for the whole thing. You have to go through it all at once and then go back over it little bits at a time. It doesn't always work that way for other courses though. If I have to take notes, I can't read the book and then write down everything I remember. I have to do that systematically. For drama and for the arts that heart-ruled part of me, is random; and everything else, such as school and work, I have to be organized...

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I experiment randomly because I am not the type of person who can do something the same way each time....

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I love playing with many different things at once, but I keep them organized. If I am experimenting with makeup, I will put the reds together, and the blues together, etc., so I can look around and see what I am working with. I hate chaos, yet I have a tendency to be rather chaotic. I would [like to] have it all organized...

Ingrid saw herself as being more unstructured in drama then in her 'other life'. Before becoming involved in

assignments, Ingrid and Roxanne felt it was important to get a total perspective: 'get the feel for the whole thing', 'so I can look around and see what I am working with'. Then the attack could be more organized: a difficulty for Roxanne who had 'a tendency to be rather chaotic'.

The importance of intuition in drama was often mentioned in our conversations.

Are you more intuitive or more rational and logical?

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> I am intuitive, and <u>then</u> rational and logical. The rational is the touching up; the intuitive is the main things like interpreting the character, getting the feel for them and walking like them. The rational is thinking about where the person would pause, in regard to the situation they are in. Sometimes that comes intuitively. The first time I did my piece after I memorized it, I hadn't done it for anyone and yet I got up on stage and did it intuitively and since then it has not changed much. It is only a little bit more polished, so I guess the bulk of it is intuitive, for drama. For school, I am more rational, for drama I am intuitive.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am more intuitive: I feel that a character should say this or do that so I go with my feelings. Sometimes I am stubborn because Miss Smith will tell me act one way, and my feelings tell me to act a different way, and I have a hard time doing it the teacher's way. Even in my other courses and my personal life I am intuitive ...

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

> I am <u>definitely</u> intuitive. If I have a feeling, I will go with it, and I am usually very happy that I did. I always go with my gut feeling and I try not to reason it out. I reason it out afterwards. My first instinct is to go with gut feelings.

Intuition was central, paramount to the experience of drama. For our integrated informant, rationality was useful in refining the character and in reflection on the dramatic experience.

<u>Saying Goodbye...</u>

It was hard to say goodbye to my three informants: they had revealed their thoughts and feelings to me, they had welcomed me into their world. This had become their story. These were some of their final reflections in the interviews.

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style Informant)

> They [the interviews] didn't bring up new areas, they just enhanced old ones. This is just reinforcing the whole thing, and it is another way to look at it. drama is part of my whole dilemma, because I have a constant battle between the head and the heart, and I want the heart to win. I guess I am just partial, but I can't lie and say that the heart is winning all the time because it isn't. I knew that something was wrong, but I didn't know what it was. Then I heard a song by Chris DeBurgh about the battle between the head and the heart, and the heart wins. That was when I knew what was going on inside of me. These interviews made me look at myself and I wonder if

there is a scientific reason for this and I'm not just crazy. This didn't have any bad effects on me.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant)

Some of the questions you asked really made me stop and think about things I haven't thought about before. I am really glad I had the chance to do these interviews, because they made me look at things and really think about them. They have given me a chance to think about what drama has done for me, and why I took drama.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Informant)

I haven't changed, but looking into what I have done for so many years has made me see how much drama has been a part of my life. I never even knew it!! I always thought it was just a hobby, but now I see that it has been a major part of my life for years. I saw how important drama has been.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

Teachers should have a good understanding of their own learning style so that a convenient interactive learning and teaching relationship be nurtured and maintained.

Rubenzer (1982)

Miss Smith describes her teaching:

On my first reading [of a script], I look at the whole picture and I don't even consider units. I am reading it for appropriateness and getting a feel as to whether the play is something I would like or not. Then the next time I read it I will look at it in units, or characters.

I rely on images. It goes back to the way I approach the script, I see pictures before I see anything else. I use imaging a lot with my students as a way of creating. I love doing that.

I am intuitive. I use it when I work on set design.

I go with what feels right. I am intuitive in terms of directing, and with dealing with the students. I approach the script as a whole and I get and draw pictures. I can see a set or colours or just things arranged. Then I break it down into units, and then I work on it unit by unit. I do most of it before I get to the students and then I work through it with the students and if there is anything that needs changing, we do it then.

I experiment randomly. If there are pieces of a script that I think I would like to do one way, I will try it, and when I am in the middle of that, I'll get another idea for a different part and I will go to that. There is no real system to how I do it, it is not done in a linear fashion, I jump all over the place. I look at the big picture, and break it down afterwards.

I plan my teaching, but there are many times when something is working so I continue with it. I am flexible within my planning. I have a Five Year Plan of things I would like to do. In my first year I found out I had too many things I wanted to do and I couldn't do it. I write down things I would eventually like to do, as they come to me. Whether or not I get to them isn't important, but the fact that I was listing them and I was interested in doing them is important.

I am subjective when I am working with them [students] and directing them, but my treatment of them is based on what I know of them. When I evaluate them I am objective. Even though I try to back away, it hasn't been possible. When I am evaluating my work with them as a director, I get feedback from them and I ask for criticism in the same way as I deal with them. I learn a lot of things I don't even think about. Some of the kids need more critiquing than others. I work with them as individuals.

I demonstrate a lot, but I speak as I demonstrate...

I think there is only once during my teaching of English that I used a multiple choice test, everything else was paragraph or essay answer type tests. I guess I lean more towards the open-ended.

I am self-acting. I could teach anywhere. I think we become spoiled as teachers because our space becomes very important, but when we don't have the

> space and we realize we can still function then it isn't important.
>
> What I find interesting about my learning and teaching style is that I knew from an early age that I wanted to be a teacher, and I knew that it wasn't a way to make money but I wanted to do it anyway. I think I was ready to teach, long before I graduated, but I am glad I had to go through all those courses. I am not sure that some things in university made me a better teacher, because of my learning style. I am sure I had teachers who were absolutely left-brained but it was interesting. Instead of looking at what they were teaching, I looked at how they were teaching it, and I learned how to do things and how not to do things.

Miss Smith's style of learning and thinking was right dominant both by her own assessment and the Torrance evaluative questionnaire. Her relationships with the three informants were always positive and individually tuned to each student.

Miss Smith:

> Ingrid was highly motivated. She was a desperate over-achiever, and I relate to it because I am like that. She works really hard and never stops wanting to learn. With her "Clear Glass Marbles", I told her right from the beginning when we were reading through the script that she should audition for it because it is a beautiful piece. She got the basics done really early, and through the rehearsals and times she worked on her own, she was always changing something, and constantly asking for opinions. She always strives higher and higher. Her assignments were always in on time. She was very responsible. I have had Ingrid for three years, and she has been an excellent student. She is consistent, and a hard worker in terms or not only what goes on in class but in helping the other students and in terms of her other school work. She is an honour student. She makes time for her other commitments, like work and housework.

> Fay was quite motivated, she took direction really well, and there is a spark of talent in her but I don't think the ambition is there. I don't know if she will take it any further. She has come a long way since Drama 20. Fay was quite mature and seemed to be dealing with me on a different level than Roxanne was. It was more of a friendship level. She got her assignments in on time. If she wasn't able to get things in on time, she would let me know that it was coming, and she was sorry. There was a concern for her marks. She got along really well with the other students.
>
> Roxanne needs someone who would stay on top of her at all times and make and encourage her to do things. She was not very good at getting down to memorizing her lines. She always gave excuses for not doing things, and there really weren't any excuses. It was her choice not to do it. It was quite difficult to direct her because no matter what I said, she wouldn't do things. She thought she tried them but she wasn't doing it. She didn't hand in assignments, because she either forgot or just didn't bother. At midterm, I told her that if she handed in two particular assignments, her mark would go from a 67 to an 80, depending on the mark she got on the assignments. That wasn't important to her. She felt that a 67 was better than a 47, but not as good as 80, but that was enough for her. I had to guide her along. There have been a lot of things happening to her that have made me approach her differently. I have been trying to keep connected with her all the time, and I am like that with all my grade twelves. It is easier to do when you have a small group, especially since most of them have been with me for three years. That makes it a little nicer because they know me and I know them.

There were some differences in the way Miss Smith related to each of the informants.

> I always try and give Ingrid as much as I can. It was desperate this semester because I was trying to shove everything I knew into one student who would maybe use it someday or know what to do with it. She is a friend of mine. She takes care of my house and

my plants whenever I go away. She is really responsible and is a very caring woman. She is terribly sensitive. She would come into the drama room often just to talk about things other than school. I know she is having problems with her parents. I don't think they are as thrilled with drama as she is, which is unfortunate, but I think a year away will do her a world of good. I hope it will. In dealing with her in the classroom, I am aware of her sensitivity, but I am also aware that she needs more in terms of knowledge and feedback all the time.

I don't know if it is because Fay is a year older than the others but she has always dealt with me as a friend. I have no problem with that at all because she knows when to step back and play the student. It was fun to direct her in "Graceland" because she was so funny and at times she is very off-the-wall and hyper. She has a problem where she forgets lines, and I don't think it is stage fright. It is more of a habit. It is totally out of character for her but the way she deals with it is quite humorous. I hope she will get better over time. It has improved this semester from Drama 20, and I think it is just a nervous habit. She is a fun student and she doesn't take anything too seriously. She will work seriously, and will listen to you and respond but she knows when to enjoy things. For her, there weren't a lot of highs and lows emotionally this term. I have always enjoyed working with her because she is so bright and positive.

The way Roxanne related to me changed part way through the semester because of a personal concern that came up with her that I was involved with helping her deal with. It seemed to change our relationship positively. She has incredible energy at times and I really worry about her because she is very rebellious for her age and she is really fighting against things at home. There is a lot of tension there, and she sees it as primarily her parents' fault, or that they are coming down on her too hard. On one hand I see it from her perspective, but I also see it from her parents' perspective. It is a funny situation. When I deal with her that knowledge about what is happening at home is different. I have been more concerned about her in the second half of the semester. She has wanted to do a lot of things in drama, and really tries. She responded well to having another student direct one of the plays...

Did Miss Smith see the informants as having the potential or inclination to continue in drama?

> Ingrid has the talent, but I don't think she has the hardness. She is very sensitive, and it is a business where it would be hard on her. She is very analytical when she is working with scripts. She is very good to work with as both a director and an actor. She has ambitions in a lot of different places and she is unclear as to where she is going to go. I think it would be interesting for her to go into French Theatre. That would push her even further.
>
> I think Fay has the talent to go on, and I think she has the look, too. She has the facial features, good teeth, etc. They look quite often at the physiognomy of you rather than the talent. I think she has the potential and the inclination, but I think she is unclear as to when she is going to do it and how she will approach it. I have asked them many times what their plans are for next year, and she seems unsure of where she is going.
>
> I can't see Roxanne going on. I don't think she has the tenacity to stick with any one thing and be absolutely committed. Her commitment is not there.
>
> Of the three of them, I think Fay has the most of what it would take. There are some people who have gone into theatre and made it who have surprised me, but I think it is a very difficult life if they are thinking about making money and supporting themselves.

The students related differently to drama assignments:

> I made the assignments interesting enough and relating to the things that were happening, so that they would enjoy it. I think they really enjoyed the critiquing assignment. It was interesting because they had to get out and see theatre. The other thing I had them do was annotations where they had to read two plays and do a synopsis of it, as well as write down their reaction to the script, whether it would be appropriate for high school and the strengths and concerns of the script. It was forcing them to look at the script the way I do. That was a lot of work

for them because they not only had to read the play but they had to think about it. Ingrid discovered a lot of interesting things. Roxanne didn't do the assignments. There was no real problem with the three of them in regards to their other assignments such as warm-up exercises and voice and speech exercises. They are all committed to the work we were eventually getting to and they know the importance of a warm-up. For the most part, they were responsible for whatever they need to do for a show. They should be able to do most of that on their own without me having to lead them.

Knowing the learning style of her students could be useful to Miss Smith.

I think knowing something about the way they approach it helps. Looking at the results of their tests was no surprise at all because I know these students very well as I have had them before. It just reinforced what I believe. Knowing their learning style is what changes it for me, because Ingrid needs more emotional and verbal feedback, whereas Roxanne could care less. I would give Roxanne direction but it would come out the same way as it did before.

One of my boys tested a minus three, and I had known all along that he needed much more than he was getting. He was very analytical and was always asking questions. He told me he was going on to Drama 20, which is great. The way he approaches everything was from an analytical point of view, and at times it was hard for the other students to work with him because he looked at things differently than they did and he was concerned about other things that they weren't concerned about, like the order of the furniture, and the order that something was going in. Testing him made me more aware that he needed something more from me, that I wasn't giving him.

I would like to see where these students are ten years from now, and see who did something with it and who didn't. I knew from really early on that I wanted to be a teacher because I liked it and my teachers were very encouraging. I hope that I have made a difference in their lives.

Miss Smith exhibited a good understanding of her own right style approach to teaching. She made a Five Year Plan but she didn't worry about actually implementing it. Her unit plans and her daily plans were flexible and, to her students, her classes appeared unstructured and creative. She had a tacit, intuitive understanding of those students whose learning and thinking style was similar to her own and, knowing this, she also made an effort to provide for the differing needs of the other students in her classroom.

CHAPTER VI

INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Much of this thesis is the informants' story. These are my interpretations, my conclusions. You, my reader, may have gathered different things, a different slant, your own insight. Referring back to the original question I asked when I began this Study, I found that:

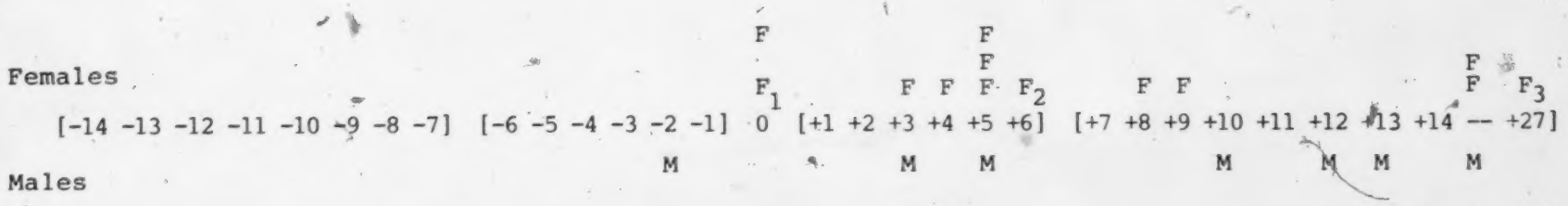
DIFFERENCES DO EXIST IN THE EXPERIENCE OF DRAMA AND CAN BE RELATED TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE.

This conclusion is based on an analysis of the results of the questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking, interpretation of the classroom teacher's reflections on her teaching, and interpretation of student responses to research questions and themes.

(A) Results of the Questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking

The Drama 30 students at Suburban High School tended to have integrated-favouring-right and right learning styles. Of the 20 students tested none were left-brain learners; 5% were integrated-favouring-left-brain learners; 10% were integrated learners; 40% were integrated-favouring-right-brain learners; and 45% were right-brain learners. The tendency to the right was most noticeable in the female students. For a detailed outline of these results see the following chart:

SEX OF SUBJECT AND LEARNING STYLES OF DRAMA 30 STUDENTS OF SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL



(Left Learning Style) (Integrated Learning Style) (Right Learning Style)

KEY INFORMANTS

F_1 = Integrated Informant (Ingrid)

F_2 = Favouring Right Informant (Fay)

F_3 = Right Informant (Roxanne)

Scale adapted from Paul Torrance
Your Style of Learning and Thinking
(see Appendix I)

(B) Learning Style Profiles

According to Torrance, a student who utilized a right learning style would be described by the right hand column; a left learning style student would be described by the left hand column and an integrated learning style student would have qualities of each.

Left Mode	Right Mode
- Rational	- Intuitive
- Responds to verbal instructions and explanations	- Responds to demonstrated, illustrated or symbolic instructions
- Experiments systematically and with control	- Experiments randomly with less restraint
- Prefers solving problems by breaking them down into parts, then approaching the problem sequentially, using logic	- Prefers solving problems by looking at the whole, the configurations, then approaching the problem through patterns, using hunches
- Makes objective judgements, extrinsic to person,	- Makes subjective judgements, intrinsic to person,
- looks at otherness	- looks at sameness
- Planned and structured	- Fluid and spontaneous
- Prefers established, certain information	- Prefers elusive, uncertain information
- Analytic reader	- Synthesizing reader
- Primary reliance on language in thinking and remembering	- Primary reliance on images in thinking and remembering
- Prefers talking and writing	- Prefers drawing and manipulating objects
- Prefers multiple choice tests	- Prefers open-ended questions
- Prefers work/study carefully planned	- Prefers work/study open-ended
- Prefers hierarchical (ranked) authority structures	- Prefers collegial (participative) authority structures
- Controls feelings	- More free with feelings
- Responds best to auditory, visual stimuli	- Responds best to kinetic stimuli (movement, action)
- Responsive to structure of environment	- Essentially self-acting
- Rarely uses metaphors and analogies	- Frequently uses metaphors and analogies

Torrance, McCarthy (1980)

These descriptors of left and right mode processing accurately profile the key informants in this Study. The Integrated Learning Style Informant saw herself as utilizing both modes of processing fluidly and using the right processing modes most specifically in drama. The Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant used the right processing mode more than the Integrated Learning Style Informant used it. The Right Learning Style Informant used the right processing mode almost exclusively: Except for 'prefers drawing and manipulating objects', the descriptors of the right processing mode were highly characteristic of her; in fact she often did not 'relate to' left mode processes. These distinctive profiles were indicated by our initial testing with the questionnaire Your Style of Learning and Thinking: Our Integrated Learning Style Informant (Ingrid) had scored (0) indicating a balance of left and right processing modes; Fay had scored (+6) indicating she had an integrated-favouring-right learning style; and Roxanne who scored (+27) was definitely a right learning style student. These learning style preferences were related to each informant's verbal description of her learning experiences, as shown in the following quotes.

Integrated Learning Style Informant (Ingrid)

> ... It really depends on what I am doing. Drama is images because you are looking at images but English

is language. When I am writing notes it is language which I transform with images.

... My memory is very quick, too. That is why school is so easy for me. Some of it is images, but some of it is remembering things that have been said... I guess my memory is a combination of them both.

... I will read the script one day, and then a few days later I go back. If I don't like it, which has happened to me before, I read it again, and pick out little things... and systematically analyze them.

... Being carefully planned when studying was causing more tension, so I tried to put in more open-ended, and that has helped... For me, there has to be a balance in between.

... A teacher can give a lecture on something, and I can understand it, but if they give a demonstration, such as film it broadens it. I can do fine with one or the other, but both makes it really clear.

... I am intuitive, and <u>then</u> rational and logical. The rational is the touching up; the intuitive is the main things like interpreting the character, getting the feel for them and walking like them. The rational is thinking about where that person would pause, in regard to the situation they are in.

<u>Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant</u> (Fay)

I think in pictures...

... I am more inclined to remember pictures. I can remember what people say, but images help me remember what the people said and what went on.

... I look at little parts as I read, and when I am done I put it together in one package. After I am finished I analyze it as a whole.

... I don't carefully plan when I study. I study when I feel like studying because if I plan it out I start thinking about other things.

... I remember more if a person talks than I do if I read it, but when it comes to someone showing me an demonstrating, I understand and remember it more.

... I am more intuitive [than rational]. I feel that a character should say this or do that so I go with my feelings.

Right Learning Style Informant (Roxanne)

I rely on images.

... I remember in actual events. I remember how it happened.

... I grasp the whole concept first. I finish a book and then I contemplate it... I relate it to people I know, even myself, and I find I get a lot more out of it.

... If I can study and concentrate I will. If not, then it is useless just sitting there because I get angry and frustrated.

... I respond better to demonstrations and illustrations because with a lecture, it goes in one ear and out the other.

... I am definitely intuitive. If I have a feeling I will go with it, and I am usually very happy that I did. I always go with my gut feeling and I try not to reason it out.

The informants' learning style influenced their drama experience. Their teacher's final reflections give an added dimension to these learning style profiles:

(C) A Teacher's Final Reflections

Ingrid (Integrated Learning Style)

Right from the beginning of our work together in Drama 10 Ingrid has always been very aware of her own learning process. In Drama 10 she understood the importance of skill

acquisition before going on to the next level, and she was always able to apply what she had learned in the past to any current situation. She was very driven to perfect her skills and was consistently seeking out new challenges for her own benefit.

She was methodical in her approach to almost every learning situation, yet she was not afraid to be creatively experimental. In terms of her acting skills, her interpretive work was wonderful, and she needed very little direction in character building. Over the years she learned how to apply the skills to practical work on the stage and seeing that was very rewarding for me. Drama was an important part of Ingrid's life, and over the three years I saw her develop emotionally, spiritually, and theatrically through her experiences both in class and extra-curricularly.

Because Ingrid has a lot of responsibilities at home she was much more mature than most of the other students her age and she was very driven in her quest to excel in everything she did at school. Both her written and practical work were always of the highest calibre, she was equally talented in both areas of expression.

I believe that Ingrid (more than many of the other students) understood (in metaphorical terms) that I could give her the tools and show her how they might be used, but that I would not build the house for her... that, she would have to do on her own. And Ingrid was always ready to meet the challenge in a way that was both cerebral (for a lack of a better term) and yet emotional and sensitive. Her powers of reasoning and judgement were almost invariably affected in some way by her sensitivity and concern for everyone else but herself.

Ingrid was ultra-responsible about everything! She was on time for rehearsals, she came prepared, she knew her lines. She listened carefully to directions and responded accordingly, but she still had a sense of humour and was able to relax with the knowledge that she was doing well, though still striving to do better.

Ingrid's final mark was 93 and she has always been the best student that I have ever taught because she challenged me as a teacher. I knew Ingrid very well because she confided in me regularly and I understood and respected her learning style because it is so much like my approach to learning, though mine is possibly a little less analytical at times! Ingrid has a lot of ambition and the skills to see things through, and I admired her tenacity. I suppose in terms of weaknesses I would say that Ingrid had a small ego and was very sensitive, if you can call those weaknesses. However, those two things caused Ingrid a fair bit of grief over her years in drama, because a few people saw that they could step on her and get away with it. By the time Drama 30 came around she had developed a greater self-confidence and others were much less likely to take advantage of her.

During her last year at Suburban High everything really came together for Ingrid in drama. I felt that she did her finest work in that year, and she had such an incredible approach to character building, step by step learning new things, internalizing feelings, it was the culmination of all her work over the three years and it was wonderful to witness all of it.

Fay (Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style)

Fay was another delightful student to work with in drama because she was always trying so hard and getting so frustrated at her attempts to do it better. She had a very clear understanding of when her work was not up to whatever standard she had set and she was the first one to stop a rehearsal or whatever and start again. She responded to direction well and seemed to enjoy the practical work more than the written work, even though she did all the assigned work as given. Fay had a wonderful sense of comic timing, thought I'm not sure whether she realized it. She had a positive attitude and a serious concern to improve her work, especially in acting.

When I first began working with Fay I found her to be a little insecure about herself, others, and the whole process of drama, but over time she's come a long way. She has developed more self-confidence and is able to take more creative risks in acting. Fay has the ambition to do things in her future related to the performing arts, but I think she will be working on developing the drive to do them. It's not that she's lazy, I think that sometimes the size of the adventure inhibits her somewhat, She's not always confident about her ability to compete with the rest of the hopefuls, and this was true with the early part of Drama 30. Fay became known for her inability to remember lines in dialogue that she had done over and over. She would be in the middle of a few lines of dialogue (in rehearsal) and then just go absolutely BLANK, and then utter an expletive or something else equally appropriate, stamp her foot, and then go on. It was almost like a comedy routine, but it happened to Fay on a regular basis. I think it was a bad habit, and I'm sure that over time and with many other roles she will get rid of it! (AGH!) I can't remember it ever happening in performance.

Fay was very good with verbal skills, she never had a problem explaining anything, or describing anything, and she wore her heart on her sleeve. When she was in a good mood, you knew it, and when she was in a bad mood, you knew it. I found her to be mature for her age, actually she was a little older than the rest of the class, and very responsible in terms of rehearsals and her obligation to others in the cast.

Her approach to script work was, I believe, very much step by step. Meaning that she seemed to concentrate on each unit of the play as we went along, she seldom went ahead and learned lines from a future rehearsal unit. In that way she was very methodical, though her approach to the character building was more scattered. I don't know how to describe it any better than that!

Her final mark was eighty-five or eighty-seven, I can't remember, and I never keep any of my old mark sheets. In the end Fay turned out to be one of the stronger students in terms of drama skills in that class. She was a pleasure to work with because of her sense of humour and her desire to improve her work. I don't think Fay ever got to the point where she believed that her work was good, but there were certainly those around her who did, including me. I know she was quite often happy when something went right for her on stage, but there was always something else that she felt that she could have done better.

Fay is very physically expressive, in that she uses gesture, facial expression, and body movement to describe things that she is excited about. I always wished that there was more time in drama to explore more movement and dance. I think Fay would have benefitted from the control! Her written work on the other hand was generally full of spelling and other grammatical errors, which may have been just lack of proof-reading or whatever on her part.

Fay struck me as being socially well-adjusted and drama was most likely her strongest subject in school. Her family was very supportive, especially her sisters I think, and with drama she had found an area in which she could excel. I believe that made her feel very positive about herself and her place in the family. My opinion is based on my knowledge of her family relationship and observations over the years of Fay and her sister Lynn, who was also a drama student of mine for two years.

I am also very glad to have had the chance to teach Fay and see her come along so well. I think Fay would make a great storyteller, or maybe a newscaster (!), her sense of the theatrical always made me laugh, even though, as I said before, she didn't necessarily realize that she was being funny. Every teacher should be as lucky as I to have had so many students who worked so hard at gaining knowledge, and Fay was just one of them. Academically she was not as enthusiastic, but in practical work she eventually shone.

Roxanne (Right Learning Style Student)

Roxanne was always very positive and enthusiastic about her acting projects, and about drama in general. I know that it was the course in which she put the most effort, though

she always seemed to know what assignments she didn't have to hand in, yet still get a passing mark at the end of the term. She definitely picked and chose which assignments she was going to do, and which ones she wasn't going to do. I don't believe that she was concerned about the fact that she was missing assignments, because I spoke to her a number of times and she always seemed to understand that the reason she wasn't getting marks in the eighties was because she hadn't done the required work. She accepted that and was satisfied with the lower mark, even though both she and I knew that it could have been higher, if she had chosen to complete the work. I stopped being frustrated about Roxanne's under-achieverism (new word!) when I first had her as a student in Drama 10. I realized then what she was like as a student and a person and I understood and accepted it. Both of us knew that what was most important was that she was learning something, feeling good about herself and others, and enjoying the experience ... I really couldn't ask any more than that from her. During productions Roxanne's lack of concern for schedules was very frustrating for everyone in the cast. There were a number of times when she failed to show up for crucial rehearsals, and would not bother to notify anyone of the fact that she would not be there. She seemed to be confident about her progress and therefore felt that the rehearsals were not as important to her. What she consistently failed to understand was that her absence always adversely affected the other cast members and seriously hindered the work that was scheduled for that particular rehearsal. This pattern was seen in other incidents in which Roxanne did things without ever seriously considering the impact on others. I don't think her behaviour was malicious in any way, it's just the way she was and you had to understand it and try to deal with it!

Roxanne was a kind person and very sympathetic to the problems of others around her. She was terribly apologetic the next day (after missing rehearsal the night before) to all the cast members, and promised to be better next time... But this pattern was repeated again and again.

Roxanne was very energetic and really did try hard when I was able to get her focused on the work. She was, however, very easily distracted and had a short attention span for most things.

In working with Roxanne I found that I varied many things about my teaching style when I saw that she was losing interest etc. Linear thinking was not Roxanne's strong point! She seemed to respond well to demonstration, see and do sorts of things, experimenting with different approaches to character work etc. I felt that many times I pushed Roxanne far past what she believed she could do, and it was a learning experience for both of us.

Roxanne's marks were normally in the sixties and seventies with her final mark being a seventy. As I mentioned

earlier, her mark was affected by the fact that she failed to hand in assignments, even though I gave her many chances to redeem herself throughout the term.

There were many times when she really surprised me by doing some wonderful work in acting projects etc., and that sort of thing had been going on since Drama 10. She was most definitely capable of producing some fine work, though her approach to the process was not very serious. It was almost as if she wanted to be a team player but she didn't want to practice.

I know that I was more tolerant of Roxanne's approach because of my knowledge of her personal life and the confusion (or whatever you may call it) and sadness etc. that seemed to surround her in her last year of high school. I knew all of my Drama 30 students well, but those that had been with me since Drama 10 were especially close to my heart, because I had seen their progress and knew their families and all that.

Roxanne always seemed unable to comprehend things logically and therefore her solutions did not always seem very logical to those around her who cared for her. But it was HER way of dealing with things and that was all there was to it. It was impossible to stay angry with her for long! That particular Drama 30 class was very close and non-judgmental and I know that Roxanne felt that she had a safe harbour there. (And she did!)

In general Roxanne's practical work was strong and her written work was weak, but she was a delight to have in the classroom because I felt that she was a challenge in that she always needed a little more than most of the others.

Although Miss Smith did not specifically 'teach to learning style', I observed that the teaching strategies she used displayed an intuitive and intelligent understanding of the individual student. She felt that knowing the learning style of her students could be useful in her teaching, particularly in teaching new students.

(D) Looking Back... Reflections on the Research Questions and Themes

I had become immersed in my study. The informants had revealed their stories to me; the themes, the topics of my study broadened and intensified; they distanced me from my Pilot Study and assumed a life of their own. When I reflected on the themes generated in the Pilot Study I was excited to find uncanny links, subtle connections in the responses of the informants in the Pilot Study and in the Main Study who shared the same learning style:

(i) The Length and Type of Involvement in Drama Activities

All of the key informants had a satisfying and early involvement in drama activities. The Right Learning Style Informant appeared to have the strongest drama support from her parents. She mentioned them often during the interviews.

As in the Pilot Study, the Right Learning Style Informant was most highly involved in developmental drama activities that had continued from her childhood and were still seen as being important today. She was also positive about her involvement in improvisation and Theatre Sports.

Her reaction was in marked contrast to the Integrated Learning Style Informant who found these areas frustrating. The Integrated Learning Style Informant was the most

proficient and experienced within the technical aspects of theatre. She was organized and practical; she could be relied upon to get things done. In comparison, the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant and Right Learning Style Informant felt unskilled and inexperienced in these areas. This problem was increased by a general lack of interest in technical areas and, when faced with a choice between acting and 'tech', these students always chose to act.

(ii) Reasons for enrolling in drama

The responses of the informants in the Study echoed the responses of the students in the Pilot Study: the integrated learning style students' reasons for enrolling in drama were practical and logical: Drama helped with speech. It helped them to act more natural and to relate to people. The right learning style students were most personally affected by drama. They felt drama had changed them; had given them the ability to express themselves and show the world their true selves.

Drama helped fill social needs for all the students interviewed. Many students enrolled because their friends were also enrolling in drama or because they knew they could make new friends in this type of class. All the students expected the drama class to be friendly and fun.

The Right Learning Style Informant was the only

student who mentioned the influence of her teacher in her decision to continue taking drama. Her teacher was her inspiration, teaching her sensitivity toward a character and toward herself.

(iii) Preference for Teaching Style

The personality of the teacher was of major importance to the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style and Right Learning Style students in this study.

The Integrated Learning Style Informant could find her own way, she would learn regardless of the teacher's personality or teaching style. The Right Learning Style Students needed to know that their teacher was compassionate and sensitive to them. It was important that their teacher liked them. This, combined with demonstrations and activities, rather than reading and lectures, kept them involved.

(iv) Students' Attitudes to Other Subjects in the High School Curriculum

In the Pilot Study the Right Learning Style Student and Integrated Student preferred physical education, social studies and English (except grammar) to mathematics, physics and chemistry. This same preference was echoed by our informants.

The Right Learning Style Informant had the greatest

aversion for mathematics and the things she associated with it such as personal gain or even the memorization of lines in a play. Her emotions and sometimes stubborn attitude contrasted with the Integrated Learning Style Informant who was successfully involved in a variety of subjects and tasks.

(v) Reflections on the Acting Experience

The acting experience was a recurring theme in both the Pilot Study and the Study. In the Pilot Study, acting was the most difficult part of drama for the Left Learning Style Student. The Right Learning Style Students loved acting. It appears that a drama program which includes acting in front of an audience generates enthusiastic involvement from all but the Left Learning Style Students.

The approach to character development was most internalized for the Right Learning Style Informant who saw the characters as a part of herself: she became the characters and picked up a lot of their traits. The Integrated Learning Style Informant and the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant were more analytical and approached acting in a linear way, separating the script into units, and analyzing the motives of the character. Both the Integrated Learning Style Informant and the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant worked line by

line, piece by piece in an attempt to 'put the character on'. They did recognize the inherent strength of the intuitive approach but this approach was more difficult to them than the presentational style.

Viewing each informant's performance of a five-minute monologue from the play Talking With... (1983) provided a visual correlation between the student's acting and learning style. The Right Learning Style Informant's characterization appeared chaotic, intense and internalized in contrast to the Integrated Learning Style Student, whose characterization appeared more thoughtful, measured and controlled.

As a teacher/director I feel it is valid to expect that Right Learning Style Students will rely on and show strength in an intuitive approach to character building. They may have difficulty learning lines and approaching the script in an organized way.

The Integrated Learning Style Students and the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Students relate well to the presentational directing style and may recognize the tension, yet balance, in a combination of the presentational and representational styles. These conclusions are verified and magnified in A Teacher's Final Reflections (page 104).

(vi) Academic Success and Future Aspirations

In the Pilot Study and in the Main Study, the Right Learning Style Students had major problems in school. They were not very good at memorizing lines, and could be difficult to direct because they felt their own interpretations were best (and sometimes they were!). Assignments were often missed and higher marks did not entice these students to do better work. They needed a great amount of encouragement and personal attention.

The Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant was a good student and the Integrated Learning Style Informant was an excellent student. She was strongly motivated and a high achiever. Her assignments were always handed in on time. She was a consistently hard worker in her drama class and in her other school work.

All the students were unsure about their future but they all wanted to continue their involvement in drama in some way.

(vii) Anomalies

Several items appeared in this Study that did not fit all the patterns. The Integrated Informant was more adept at drawing, painting and sculpting than the other informants. She also enjoyed participating in these activities in her

spare time. Another anomaly is that the classroom teacher had a right learning and thinking style yet she was most empathetic with and described herself as being most like the Integrated Informant. In some responses it is difficult to assess what is a function of the three-year relationship with the teacher or is due to learning style.

Final Reflections

The process of this study was an integral part of my growth as a teacher and as a researcher. I look back to the original questions that led me to this study of drama and learning style and I find that:

High school drama students have a preferred thinking/learning style that is different from the general school population. Drama classes seemed to attract right learning style students to an inordinate degree, particularly by the Drama 30 level. The right learning style students appeared to have a more extensive drama background than the Integrated students. We can question if this prior experience fostered preference for right style learning, or if they had already a distinct learning style preference as children.

Learning style does contribute to a unique, individual drama experience. Each student's individual learning style

can affect her relationship to her classroom experience, her attitude to herself, her classmates, to her teacher, and to the drama curriculum.

I could use my knowledge of learning style for more effective teaching. I am now more aware of and try to be more responsive to the left style learners in my drama classes. (There are a few in Drama 10!) I provide detailed, sequential outlines of our drama projects and a precise breakdown of evaluation and assignment weighting. These students are interested in their marks! I attempt to have written reference material available for them. These strategies increase the quantity and quality of learning options available to the right learning style students as well, who already feel comfortable learning in a setting that is compatible with their learning style.

Drama education can balance a general education that is often tilted to the left. Often the core subject matter and teaching style neglect the potential of the right hemisphere:

> Are today's teachers 'only educating half of the brain'? Are cutbacks in music and arts programs (curricula that nurture the right side of the brain) forcing teachers to teach in a 'half-brained' fashion?
>
> Zenhausern (1982)

Drama education fulfills different needs for left, integrated and right learning style students. For the Integrated Learning Style Students it provided a necessary balance:

> I talked about the struggle between head and heart before, and the head always wins because being in school you have to get good marks. You are training your brain, and your heart is getting left behind. I feel sorry for people who didn't pursue training in the emotional area at all. Drama was that training for me.

For the Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Student and for the Right Learning Style Student, to an even greater degree, it enhanced and substantiated the essence of their being:

> It helped bring me out of my shell. I am basically a shy person, and I hide it quite well, but drama has taught me to continue on, like, the show must go on. It has changed my life.

This, in many ways, is their story; but it has become my story as well. My three informants' voices echo again and again in my classroom, shaping and changing the ways I relate to my students, and reflecting a new understanding of myself as a young student involved in the fine arts, and myself as a teacher and researcher.

Recommendations

Given the small number of students enrolled in Drama 30 in any one school it is recommended that the testing for learning style preference be replicated using larger samples which may be obtained by studying a large number of students in several schools or by studying students in one school over several years.

We should investigate why the left style learners enrolled in Drama 10 do not continue their involvement in drama to the Drama 30 level.

This study involved three female students as key informants; it would be worthwhile to replicate a similar study in which the key informants were male students.

Students' knowledge of their learning style scores may assist them in consciously adjusting to the strengths and weaknesses of their learning styles. Teachers should also be made aware of these scores so they can accommodate various learning styles and teach more effectively.

There are still many unanswered questions. Learning style theory will not solve all the problems of education but, as an important component of a student's drama experience, it provides an exciting area for future research.

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APPENDIX I

Your Style of Learning and Thinking

Form C. C.

Paul Torrance

YOUR STYLE OF LEARNING AND THINKING FORM C-C (COPYRIGHT, PAUL TORRANCE, 1980)

Choose only one answer for each question, A, B or C, and put an X in the appropriate column.

	A	B	C		A	B	C		A	B	C		A	B	C		A	B	C
1.				13.				25.				37.				49.			
2.				14.				26.				38.				50.			
3.				15.				27.				39.							
4.				16.				28.				40.							
5.				17.				29.				41.							
6.				18.				30.				42.							
7.				19.				31.				43.							
8.				20.				32.				44.							
9.				21.				33.				45.							
10.				22.				34.				46.							
11.				23.				35.				47.							
12.				24.				36.				48.							

Scoring:

1. Compute Total number of A's_____, total number of B's_____, total number of C's_____.

2. Compute total number of B's <u>minus</u> total number of A's. (It can be a minus or a plus number.)_____

3. If your number of C's is 15 or higher you must now divide your B minus A score by three._____

   OR if your number of C's is from 9 to 14, you must divide your B minus A score by two._____

   OR if your number of C's is less than 9, do not divide at all.
   (In this case, your B minus A score is your final score.)

4. Plot your score below.

-14 -13 -12 -11 -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5 +6 +7 +8 +9 +10 +11 +12 +13 +14

Left brain dominance — WB favoring/left — WB — WB favoring/right — Right brain dominance

SECTION II - Your Style of Thinking and Learning - Put an X on the answer sheet in the appropriate column, A, B or C for the description that is most like you. Mark only one X for each question.

		A	B	C
1.	I remember best...	names	faces	both names and faces.
2.	I prefer to have things explained to me...	with words	by showing them to me	both ways.
3.	I prefer classes	with one assigrment at a time	where I work on many things at once	both ways.
4.	I prefer...	multiple choice tests	essay tests	both kinds of tests.
5.	I am...	not good at body language, I prefer to listen to what people say.	good at body language	sometimes good, but other times not good.
6.	I am...	not good at thinking of funny things to say and do	good at thinking of funny things to say and do	sometimes good.
7.	I prefer classes...	where I listen to "experts"	in which I move around and try things	where I listen and also try things.
8.	I decide what I think about things..	by looking at the facts	based on my experience	both ways.
9.	I tend to solve problems...	with a serious, business-like approach	with a playful approach	with both approaches.
10.	I like...	to use proper materials to get jobs done	to use whatever is available to get jobs done	a little of both.
11.	I like my classes or work to be...	planned so I know exactly what to do	open with opportunities for changes as I go along	both planned and open to changes.
12.	I am...	never inventive	very inventive	occasionally inventive.
13.	I prefer classes when I am expected..	to learn about things I can use in the future	to learn things I can use right away.	both kinds of classes.
14.	I...	would rather not guess or play hunches	like to play hunches and guess	sometimes make guesses and play hunches.
15.	I like to express feelings and ideas..	in plain language	in poetry, song, dance, art	both ways.
16.	I get insights from poetry, symbols, etc...	rarely	usually	sometimes.

Section II (continued)

		A	B	C
17.	I prefer...	solving one problem at a time	solving more than one problem at a time	both equally.
18.	I respond more to people when...	they appeal to my logical side, my intellect	when they appeal to my emotional side, my feelings	equally respond to both kinds of appeal.
19.	I prefer to learn..	the well established parts of a subject	about the unclear parts, the hidden possibilities	both ways.
20.	I prefer...	analytic reading, taking ideas apart and thinking about them separately	creative reading, putting a lot of ideas together	both kinds of reading.
21.	I prefer...	to use logic in solving problems	to use "gut feelings" in solving problems	both equally.
22.	I prefer...	to analyze problems by reading and listening to experts	to see and imagine things when I solve problems	to do both.
23.	I'm very good at..	explaining things with words	explainint things with hand movements and actions	both.
24.	I learn best from teachers who...	explain with words	explain with movement and actions	have no preference.
25.	When I remember or think about things, I do so best with	words	pictures and images	both equally well.
26.	I prefer to...	examine something that is finished and complete	organize and complete something that is unfinished	do both.
27.	I enjoy...	talking and writing	drawing and manipulating (handling) things	both equally.
28.	I am...	easily lost in finding directions	good at findin directions	not bad in finding directions, but not really good either.
29.	I am...	primarily intellectual	primarily intuitive	equally intellectual and intuitive
30.	I prefer to learn..	details and specific facts	from a general overview, to look at the whole picture	both ways equally.
31.	I read...	for specific details and facts	for main ideas	for both equally.

Section II (continued)

		A	B	C
32.	I learn and remember...	only those things specifically studied	details and facts in the environment no specifically studied	have noticed no difference in these areas.
33.	I like to read...	realistice stories	fantasy stories	no preference.
34.	I feel it is more fun to...	plan realistically	dream	both equally fun.
35.	I...	prefer total quiet when reading or studying	prefer music while reading or studying	listen to music only when reading for enjoyment, not when studying.
36.	I would like to write...	non-fiction books	fiction books	no preference.
37.	If seeking mental health counseling, I would prefer...	the confidentiality of individual counseling	group counseling and sharing of feelings with others	no preference for group over individual counseling.
38.	I enjoy...	copying and filing in details	drawing my own images and ideas	both equally.
39.	It is more exciting..	to improve something	to invent something	both are exciting.
40.	I prefer to learn...	by examining	by exploring	both ways equally.
41.	I prefer...	algebra	geometry	both equally.
42.	I am skilled in...	sequencing ideas	showing relationships among ideas	both equally.
43.	I prefer...	dogs	cats	both equally.
44.	I...	use time to organize myself and my personal activities	have difficulty in pacing my personal activities to time limits	pace personal activity to time limits easily.
45.	I have...	almost no mood changes	frequend mood changes	few mood changes.
46.	I amm...	almost never absentminded	frequently somewhat absentminded	occasionally absent-minded.
47.	I am strong...	in recalling verbal materials (names, dates)	in recalling spatial material	equally strong in both
48.	I am skilled in..	the statistical, scientific prediction of outcomes	the intuitive prediction of outcomes	equally skilled in both.
49.	I prefer...	outlining over summarizing	summarizing over outlining	have no real preference.
50.	I prefer...	verbal instructions	demonstrations	no real preference.

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DISCUSSION SHEET TWO

Left Mode	Right Mode
- Rational	- Intuitive
- Responds to verbal instructions and explanations	- Responds to demonstrated, illustrated or symbolic instructions
- Experiments systematically and with control	- Experiments randomly with less restraint
- Prefers solving problems by breaking them down into parts, then approaching the problem sequentially, using logic	- Prefers solving problems by looking at the whole, the configurations, then approaching the problem through patterns, using hunches
- Makes objective judgements, extrinsic to person, looks at otherness	- Makes subjective judgements, intrinsic to person, looks at sameness
- Planned and structured	- Fluid and spontaneous
- Prefers established, certain information	- Prefers elusive, uncertain information
- Analytic reader	- Synthesizing reader
- Primary reliance on language in thinking and remembering	- Primary reliance on images in thinking and remembering
- Prefers talking and writing	- Prefers drawing and manipulating objects
- Prefers multiple choice tests	- Prefers open-ended questions
- Prefers work/study carefully planned	- Prefers work/study open-ended
- Prefers hierarchical (ranked) authority structures	- Prefers collegial (participative) authority structures
- Controls feelings	- More free with feelings
- Responds best to auditory, visual stimuli	- Responds best to kinetic stimuli (movement, action)
- Responsive to structure of environment	- Essentially self-acting
- Rarely uses metaphors and analogies	- Frequently uses metaphors and analogies

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Adapted from Paul Torrence, Your Style of Learning and Thinking (Copyright 1980) and reprinted in The 4Mat System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques. McCarthy 1980. Page 79.

APPENDIX II

A Sample of Interview Questions and Responses of the Three Key Informants

Researcher: Looking back over your drama instruction from grade one on, what type of instruction did you have? What kind would you prefer to have?

A. Integrated Learning Style Informant

During elementary, there was literally no formal instruction, and I don't remember taking up a play in Language Arts, but I guess reading aloud and being taught to read with expression would be an initial drama training. You learn to do this from grade one to grade six, but it is hardest in grade one. In grade five and six we did a class play. It wasn't really instructions. We just had to memorize our lines, and the teacher would tell us to make it look like this or that. I didn't start really formal instruction until grade seven. I took drama. The class wasn't overly wonderful because there were a lot of kids who didn't want to be there. We did things like puppetry. A lot of the things we did were useless. We did makeup and costumes, and you can't worry about that until you've acted, and that frustrated me. After grade seven, we were only allowed two options, and I had to take French. I had to choose between art and drama and I picked art because there was a drama club and no art club. For the rest of junior high I was in drama club and the instruction there was far more valuable than that in class because it was more specific and people were more cooperative, so the teacher could tell us to do things and they got done quicker. We learned how to move and talk, but we never got into pausing and timing. I had never even heard those words in reference to stage before. Some people have a natural talent to do that, but we never had a formal name for it. When I got to grade ten, we spent most of the time doing exercises to develope our pausing and timing. WE didn't know that was why we did them. Some people when asked what they learned, they didn't see that they had learned anything. The rest of the instruction was do something and then have your spot, and do something and have your spot [sic] and that kind of instruction is very nice because it is very specialized to your own needs. A lot of the instruction comes from yourself and you don't realize you are doing it.

B. Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant

Drama brings people out of themselves, and it makes them more open. It allows them to be themselves in front of other people. A drama teacher should get students to open up and just be themselves, and be comfortable with that. Exercises, such as improvisation, are helpful because they allow the student to think quicker and find ways to make a character interesting. I have been taught improvisation ever since I started drama and think it is a really good place to begin. When I think back on the drama I have done, I can't remember specific things we learned. I have used everything I was taught and I have put it into one package. They all help me develop my character, bring it alive, and understand it. When I do a play and become a character, I don't think about what I learned and when, it all comes almost naturally. It is really hard to say what I have learned because I have learned so much.

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I think it is a really good idea to learn Theatre Sports, and how to feel comfortable in front of people, public speaking and doing collectives because sometimes it is easier to do those than to do a script because you made it easier to do those than to do a script because you made it up yourself. I would have really enjoyed that in elementary. In grade six, we did Theatre Sports and more of the basics. In junior high, I would teach the technical aspects of drama, such a lighting and concentrate more on backstage and how to do a play backstage. Then maybe they could do the technical work for the people in high school. I feel it is important for them to know what goes on backstage, before they go on stage. I don't know anything technical, and when I go on stage, I am depending on others completely, and that isn't good. In grade ten I would start on a script, and work with just a section of it. In grade eleven, I would move on to a whole script, and in grade twelve, I would refine and polish the acting skills. I would stay away from mime, probably because I hated it when I took it. I find it too hard and boring to watch.

Researcher: Do you make subjective judgements, or do you make objective judgements?

A. Integrated Learning Style Informant

Somewhere in there, there is a balance between the two. I have never fought with my parents, as much as I would have liked to. I think they are wrong, and subjectively I would like to badger them and talk and yell, but objectively, from their point of view, I can see their point of view, and I will go away and become calm again, and then I may say something. I am able to see someone else's point of view. Many times it is hard to react objectively, even though I see their point of view, so I guess it is a mixture because I see the other person's point of view, but I also see mine.

B. Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant

I use a little bit of both. I don't look at the situation only, sometimes I look at the people involved too.

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I try to be very objective, and see what would make a person act like they do. If there is someone who does something I don't like, I give them the benefit of the doubt and think that there is a good reason behind it. I try to take that into consideration before I pass a judgement on them.

Researcher: Has your personality changed in comparison to elementary, junior high, and high school, in the way you respond to things? If so, how and why?

A. Integrated Learning Style Informant

I was just telling my mother the other day that when people say you get more confident and more self assured as you get older, that is a lie. I can look at myself when I was in grade nine, and see that I was an independent, confident person. I got upset if the other girls teased me, but I have stood on my own, and was comfortable with that, and was very confident, self-assured and organized. As long as I

had a rope tied to something solid, I could fly wherever I wanted, but that rope got snapped and I was free-falling. I still am, but I am getting used to it. I have always been really emotional, and I still am. Kids are always really confident and infallible, they believe that they are right, no matter what and like everybody else, I don't believe that anymore. In my family, I had to look after all the kids because my parents worked, and I was always trying to do everything, so I was very organized and structured. I was hoping that in doing so, I would get some affection and it worked a little bit, but it seemed fruitless after a while. Then I realised I was doing these things for people just so they would like me, and I realised that I had to like myself first. That is a big change in my personality, and it is still going on. I am trying to relax more, and take things a bit more easy, and that has proven to be to my benefit. I am exploring new things, instead of doing everything everyone else tells me to do. I am going away for a year so that I can get away from letting other people run my life. I have changed a lot since grade one, and sometimes I feel as if I have done a complete turn-about face, but that is what I feel. My mother says I haven't changed at all. She said I have always been insecure, even though I never felt I was.

B. Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant

My personality has never changed. I have a bad temper and always have, ever since I was a little girl. I ma more respectful now, and I take other people's feelings into consideration when I am making decisions. When I was younger, I didn't care if I was hurting anyone. It had to be my way, no matter what. I guess in that way my personality has changed. I was also insecure and I didn't have a lot of confidence and now that I am finished drama, I have more confidence, and I believe in myself more. When I set my mind to doing something, even if I don't' finish it, I know that I can, and I would be able to do it if I really wanted to. My personality has changed for the better, and i am more open and honest with family and friends than I ever was before. I don't know if I grew up, or if it was because I was in drama that I became more honest, even with myself. I like sharing my feelings and I like having people share their feelings with me.

I am kind of a moody person. I have a bad temper, but I don't have a short fuse. I am really easy to get long with. I enjoy being with and talking to people. I am usually quite happy. When I'm upset I don't like to show my feelings. I would rather make people laugh than let them know I am upset. As far as my temper goes, it takes a lot to get me mad, but once I get mad, I get really mad, and that's when I take it out on other people. I really love singing, acting and dancing. I love animals and do a lot of horseback riding, and other peaceful things. I am a pretty calm person, because I like doing calm things, like going for walks, and listening to music. I am the type of person who would rather sit and listen to people telling me their problems then tell them my problems. I talk to people a lot about myself, rather than them talking to me about themselves, yet I would much rather have people talk to me, and come to me with their problems. I am always smiling and making people laugh.

Researcher: What would you like to direct? What kind of play?

A. Integrated Learning Style Informant

I don't know, I like everything and I would have to see because I have never directed. I almost directed this semester, but there was a problem with a friend of mine, and there was only room for one director. Knowing how badly she wanted to do it, I didn't want to create a conflict, so I just remained an actress. I don't know what kind of play I would like to do. I would have to be in a different frame of mind to do a comedy. I can be funny but my comic timing isn't brilliant and it might be difficult. A comedy is more difficult to pull off than a serious piece. You have to have exact timing, and the slightest little mannerism can make or break a scene. That would be too much to tackle right off the bat. I would have to stick to something with as few characters as possible, and very simple and short. From there I would try everything. I don't think I would like to do mimes very much because it is only one aspect of the theatre, and I am not terrible good at movement and expression so I wouldn't feel right directing it. I would love to direct musical theatre, as long as they had good singers. I would like to be part of it, as an actress and director.

B. Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant

I would love to direct a musical, like "The Sound of Music". That is my all-time favourite movie. If I was to direct a show, I think I would love to direct a musical with choreography and acting and singing. I would like to direct a musical because I am a very musical person myself and I love listening to music, singing, and dancing, and acting. I would like to put it all together as one. I really enjoy seeing movies and plays where they are combined. I find it really fascinating, and would like to be part of it.

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I would like to direct a television show. I think having a chance would be a humbling experience and I would get that out of my system. I know I could do a better job than some of the directors now. I am not interested in directing a play because I have a real problem with criticising and you have to be able to constructively criticise. I beat around the bush too much, and I don't stress the importance of something. If it upsets me or bothers me, I don't tell the actor, I hint at it. That wouldn't be effective. I think a director should be strong and be a leader.

Researcher: What do you feel is your relationship to the audience when you perform?

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I have always been really bad for playing up to the audience. Ever since we started doing shorts in Drama 10, if the audience laughs, I'll ham it up. In Drama 20, I played a dippy woman and I played it up with a wiggle and giggles, but I see myself as a shy person who doesn't call a lot of attention to myself. The audience really appreciated my acting...

Researcher: What types of characters do you like most to portray?

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I like comic, light-hearted characters, people who are spacey and fun to play.

Researcher: Which is your least favourite type of character to play?

C. Right Learning Style Informant

I haven't really had a lot of experience playing different characters, so it is hard to say. I have played both ends of the scale. I did Blanche from "Streetcar Named Desire" and I loved doing that part; it was wonderful. I also did Mary Pickford. I like doing everything.

Researcher: What has been your best, most memorable acting experience?

A. Integrated Learning Style Informant

That is hard to say because every one of them was different for a different reason. Drama 20 was the most memorable for being bad. The one I had the most fun doing was "The Real Inspector Hound". That was only because it is a wonderful time I was in a big cast where everybody wanted to be there. We worked on that play for almost nine months so everybody got really close. When we won the festival that year, we didn't care that we had won. We only cared that we had done a good job, and it was going to Airdre. Even though we did a lousy show there, it was fun too. "Stage Direction" was most memorable because I conquered my dramatic ego. I wanted to be the other characters. Teacher B picked that script for my friend and I, and we both insisted we didn't care which part we got, even though I wanted to be the melodramatic one. I wanted to be in the limelight, and I wanted everyone to notice me. During that play, I really tried to stop it. Everyone complimented others on the play, and not me. But I swallowed my pride, and in the long run, it was a good thing. Every show is memorable for some reason or other. "Bartok" was memorable because it made me look at myself and a relationship I was in, and look at things I never wanted to look at before. "Talking With" was good because it was the best work I have ever done. Both Teacher B and my father (who does not appreciate drama very much, and the more dramatic, deep things he doesn't understand) liked how I did the show. My dad didn't like the show, but he liked how I played my part.

Researcher: Looking back over the years, what has been your best acting experience?

B. Integrated-Favouring-Right Learning Style Informant

I really loved "Talking With", it was a wonderful experience. I really liked getting up on stage and doing a monologue in front of an audience, with just me up there. That was an experience of its own. I had never done a play like that before, but the one play I put a lot of work into was "Graceland". I am sure I will go on to do more plays, but I will never forget that one. There was only two of us doing it, and that was a different experience also. I was used to plays with a lot of other characters. I think that one would be the most memorable, basically because I put so mush into it, and I really became the character at some points. After festival, when we were pretty well finished with it, I felt drained because it was gone, and I didn't know where to go from there. It was strange not having to practice any more. I didn't feel as empty when "Talking With" was finished. I was upset when it was over, because I always like to be involved, but after "Graceland", I was depressed. I felt like I was missing a part of me.

C. Right Learning Style Informant

"Talking With" has been my best, it really worked for me. But the most remembered one which the audience liked the most, reacted to, and saw the most, was "Sixty Percent Canadian Content". That was surprising because that was written by the students. We all felt so comfortable on stage and it showed. That was the most memorable for the audience, but the most memorable for me was "Talking With". I remember it because it was a lot of work, and that we me up there, alone. I didn't have anyone to depend on, except for my own acting skills. It was just me, and the audience liked me. Except for the author, it was mine, my baby, my pet. It was my chance to shine.

APPENDIX III

Validation Statement

VALIDATION STATEMENT

I, _____, certify that these are accurate transcripts of interviews that took place in May and June, 1987.

I grant permission to Irene Robertson to use these transcripts and my grades provided that my name is not cited in the actual study.

_____
Signature

_____
Date